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H. E. BATES

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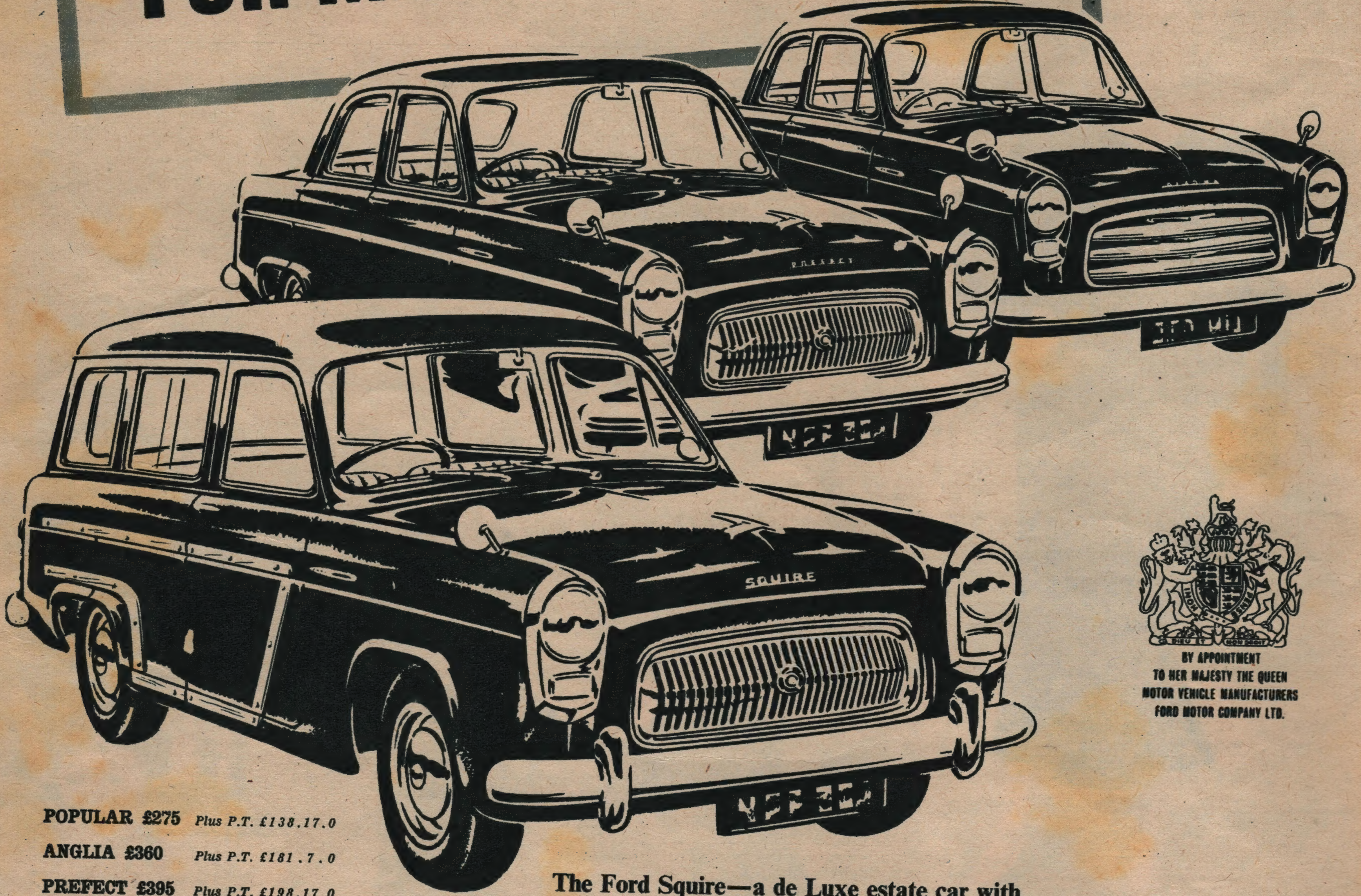

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CHANCERY 3344 MARCH 2, 1957 VOLUME 101 NUMBER 2644

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

H. E. Bates prefers a Kent garden to Tahitian boats

It was just three years ago that a flying boat carrying H. E. Bates and his wife emerged over Apia, in Samoa, from a sky filled with brilliant sunshine. The moment the aircraft landed on the water it was tossed about and nearly carried away by a terrific wind that had suddenly sprung up. "We had some very anxious minutes," says Bates. "For a time I thought that my tour of the South Sea islands would be over before it had begun."

The wind, which is characteristic of the summer rainy season, had whipped the placid seas into a white froth. It was *The White Wind*. And so, before he had even set foot on land, Bates had already collected the background material for his latest serial, specially written for JOHN BULL, which begins on page 9.

At his next stop, in the Cook Islands, Bates heard the story of how an outlying island lost its strongest young men in one of these sudden storms. A plague had broken out in the small community, and the young men took a canoe—their only means of transport or communication—in an effort to reach the main island and get help. They vanished without trace.

In Tahiti, Bates made his acquaintance with the type of rickety schooner that figures in his story. "They are rough old tubs," he recalls, "but somehow they slog through it all." It was no pleasure cruise to be battered about in one of these fragile craft—"and I'm no sailor," Bates adds ruefully. "I don't even take a dinghy round a quiet bay in the summer." He is sticking to his garden in Kent.

DR. THOMAS SHARP, the town planning expert whose article on Britain's road problem begins on page 12, writes not only from professional conviction but with feeling, too—as a motorist. In the last thirty years he has driven about a quarter of a million miles all over the country. The worst roads, he says, are in Yorkshire and Lancashire industrial towns, in the Midlands and London.

Sharp was born in County Durham and spent his boyhood there. He worked first in the local council offices, and then in various parts of the country, returning to his home town to become a don at Durham University for more than ten years.

For fifteen years Sharp has been in private practice as a town planning consultant and architect. Since the war he has planned new schemes for many towns, among them some of England's finest cathedral cities—Exeter, Salisbury, Durham and Chichester. He advised, too, on the postwar replanning of Vienna.

Dr. Sharp's plan for Oxford sparked a controversy which has been flaming for nine years and has not died down yet. It has stirred passions in the House of Lords and evoked leading articles in *The Times*. Criticism focuses principally on the plan to run a relief road across Oxford's Christ Church meadow. As a lover of beauty, Dr. Sharp admits that his decision has not been made without a good deal of personal pain. But, as he points out in his article, "It is the only answer to Oxford's road problem."

He considers that Oxford is—and will continue to be—one of the world's most beautiful cities. He has lived there for twelve years.

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London General Release Has Just Begun	PRINCIPAL CITIES and TOWNS *week of* APRIL 1 & APRIL 8

Free Speech

- Taking car buyers for a ride
- Playtime in the waiting-room
- Courtesy over the counter

I HAD always suspected that used-car dealers were smart salesmen—now I'm certain of it. I bought a new car recently and sold my old one to the dealer for £80.

A week later I saw it on show as "This Week's Snip." It looked a different car, with its new ashtrays, shiny rubber mats, and painted tyres. I noticed, too, a new knob on the gear lever, and flimsy covers hiding the worn upholstery. The registered mileage had miraculously dropped by ten thousand.

This "top dressing" couldn't have cost more than £10—yet the dealer was asking £100 more than he paid me for the car.

Certainly used-car salesmen are proving that they have little to learn from the old horse dealers.—F. S., London.

Too Black And White

Why are so many films still made in black and white? Surely colour is one field in which television cannot compete with films—at the moment, anyway.

Yet film producers complain every day about the effect of television on cinema attendances. More colour films would be a powerful form of sales appeal.—L. J. MACDONALD, Prospect Terrace, Aberdeen.

Of ninety-eight British first feature films completed in a nine months' period last year, twenty-nine were in colour.

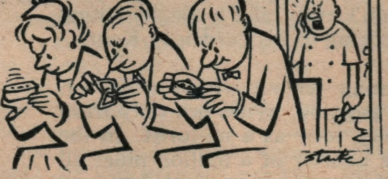
"Films cost about one-tenth more to make in colour," says an expert, "but many films, especially those set inside buildings, gain in impact from being shot in black and white."

Next Please

I was sitting alone in the dentist's waiting-room, feeling tense and miserable. I didn't feel like reading the magazines, but I found there, of all things, a child's puzzle—a small, flat, round, glass-topped affair with three balls to manoeuvre into three holes.

Some time later, when my name was called, I was still struggling with it.

I don't know whether the puzzle had been left there intentionally, but, if so, it was the right psychological approach. When I reached the dentist's chair, I was completely relaxed—and it didn't hurt a bit.—L. G. IRELAND, Llangorse, Brecon.



Room For The Night

London Airport could well copy the example of Rome, where a large chart gives full and up-to-the-minute information about hotel vacancies in the city.

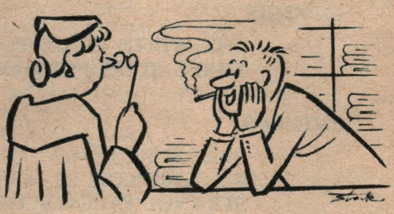
With the growing volume and importance of tourism to Britain, a clearing house of information is becoming more and more necessary.—H. COHEN, London, N.16.

London Airport provides no service, but overseas visitors can be helped by the London Hotels Information Service at 88 Brook Street, London, W.1. This scheme was started by the British Hotels and Restaurants Association and the British Travel and Holidays Association for Festival of Britain visitors and has been maintained because of its popularity.

Putting It Over

After nearly thirty years in business, I am amazed that there are so few evening classes which teach shop assistants the proper methods of approaching customers.

Boys and girls are drafted into shop work straight from school, and are expected to know the general rudiments of sales talk with no previous idea of it.



Without a senior to advise them, they may give customers the impression that they are either dumb or incompetent.—MRS. M. ROBERTS, St. Austell, Cornwall.

Retail salesmanship is taught at the College of Distributive Trades in London, and at twenty provincial centres.

"In the past five years, because trading methods and merchandise have become more complex, traders have realized that training for their staff is vital," says a college principal. "Good staff are hard to get, and the best use must be made of them."

Profitable Lesson

A director of an American company visited Britain to give "pep" talks to representatives here "to get things moving."

Among them was a friend of mine. He told me that, at the end of one conference, the American told everybody to stand up. They did so, puzzled. "Now turn your chairs up," he told them. They did so, again, and were surprised to find a £5 note pinned underneath each chair.

The American grinned at the success of his object lesson. "See what happens when you get up off your seats?" he said.—B. D., London, N.18.

Colourful Customer

As a parent I was greatly impressed by the thoughtful way in which restaurant owners in the United States treated children.

One I knew in Chicago not only had a special children's menu printed with animal designs, but handed each child a new box of crayons to use to colour the menu while waiting for the meal to be served.

Now, when eating out with my children, I always carry papers and crayons for their benefit. It does much to ease pre-meal tension.—J. G., Stirlingshire.

Better At Home

I often read about people who long to "get away from it all," and spend their days dreaming of faraway places.

When I was single, I changed my

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

shut your eyes
H.M.S.
Macdonalds
MILK CHOCOLATE
PENGUIN
SANDWICH BISCUIT
open your mouth
PENGUIN
ONLY
3½D
chocolate
Penguin
TRUST MACDONALDS TO BAKE THE BEST BISCUITS

Delicious

milk-chocolate Penguin.

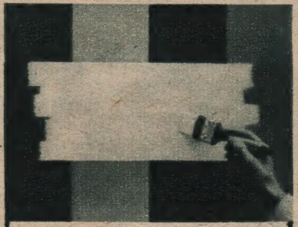
Creamy-crispy centre.

A meal in itself!

away with undercoats

one coat covers any colour

It's true . . . one coat of Luxol covers *any* colour! White can be painted directly over black, for example . . . light blue over dark red . . . dark green over ivory . . . all without any trace of 'show-through' whatsoever. And even bare wood needs only one coat of primer before the final coat. No time, no money wasted on undercoats. One coat of Luxol is all you need from start to perfect finish.
And what a perfect finish it is. In both velvet flat finish for indoor use and enamel gloss for indoors *or* out, Luxol gives you a paint finish even a professional would be proud to own. A high, lasting gloss or a deep, velvet matt that comes from the use of the very finest materials that a paint-maker can produce.
In both enamel gloss and velvet flat finish there is a wonderful range of colours to choose from — all of them intermixable to produce an infinite number of 'in between' shades. And Luxol is quick drying, non-blooming, and *so* easy to apply, even when painted under adverse conditions.
Why not start your Spring re-decorating today. Luxol covers any colour in just one coat — gives you a *perfect* finish in half the time — for half the money.



Light colours over dark, dark colours over light, a new paint now on the market offers complete coverage *in just one coat.*

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REFUND OF MONEY OR REPLACEMENT IF NOT IN CONFORMITY WITH THE INSTITUTE'S STANDARDS

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LUXOL
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One coat covers *any* colour. No time wasted on undercoats —no money wasted on undercoats. *One coat of LUXOL is all you need from start to perfect finish.*

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(*indicate which of the above you would like to receive*).

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Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

job almost as often as I changed my mind. Now I am a contented housewife, settling down at last to a home life I had never known before. And when I hear that so-and-so is off for a chopstick lesson in China, or a nose-rubbing spell at the North Pole, I couldn't care less.—MRS. M. NORRIS, Ridgeway, Golf Links Road, Westward Ho!, Devon.

Thirsty Work

While reading JOHN BULL the other evening, I suddenly felt that I had to drink a glass of water. When this happened for the second time, my husband became curious. I realized then that it was because I was reading Eric Shipton's "Struggle For Dear Life" (February 2).

The section dealing with the effects of lack of water had been making me feel dehydrated. I felt better for the water, and we did appreciate having it on tap.—MRS. L. ADAIR, Slough, Bucks.

Sense Of Responsibility

I was taking orders on a housing estate, and I couldn't resist calling on my next customer as usual, although her chimney was on fire and the brigade was outside.

On being asked in, I was just in time to hear the fire chief reprimanding my client for not having had her chimney swept recently. Then she turned to a fireman coping with the fire in the grate and said: "It was done only three weeks ago, wasn't it, Joe?"

Joe, rather unfortunately, had to answer "Yes" in the presence of his chief. As a part-time chimney sweep he had been the man who cleaned that very chimney. — G. A. YARBOROUGH, Portsmouth Road, Hindhead, Surrey.

Tossing Up

In "The Singing Football Match" (JOHN BULL, January 19), Cledwyn Hughes said that the Wanderers won the toss, and T. Jenkins, their centre-forward, kicked off. I was under the impression that the losers of the toss always kicked off.—I. CHARLES, Alltwen, Pontardawe, Swansea.

The Football Association's Law 8 (a) says: "At the beginning of the game choice of ends and the kick-off shall be decided by the toss of a coin. The team winning the toss shall have the option of choice of ends or the kick-off."

Stamp Charge

A friend tells me that somebody at his office handles the morning post as part of his work, and that he saves quite a lot of money by removing any unfranked stamps from letters and packets and using them himself. I am wondering whether this is legal.—D. N., Birmingham.

"Removing unfranked stamps and using them is defrauding the revenue," says the Post Office. "There is a maximum penalty of fourteen years' imprisonment."

And So On

Mr. Pike's comment on tipping ("Free Speech," January 26) took me back to the time when I was working as a steward in a passenger boat.

People who think that the substantial tips usually given to stewards go straight into their pockets are much mistaken. The steward has to pay the "glory hole" steward for making his bed, the cooks for a good hot meal, the baker, and even the dishwasher.

Admittedly, this gives a share to people not normally in contact with the passengers, but if the steward's tip isn't fair, he may well end up in debt. — R. F. LEAR, St. Benedict's Street, Norwich, Norfolk.

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

PERCY THROWER'S GUIDE TO EASIER GARDENING

and an exciting new series

THESE MEN ARE DANGEROUS

further details on page 24

Father Knows Best

I am fourteen and I disagree that most boys take a dim view of their fathers' knowledge and experience ("Free Speech," February 9).

I often ask my father questions. He invariably gives me an explanation or some idea of an answer, and we often discuss a variety of subjects.

He has a sense of humour, too, and our leisure time is never dull. When he ticks me off he often winks at my mother, as he still remembers the tricks he got up to as a boy.—J. MITCHELL, Priory Road, Hardway, Gosport, Hants.

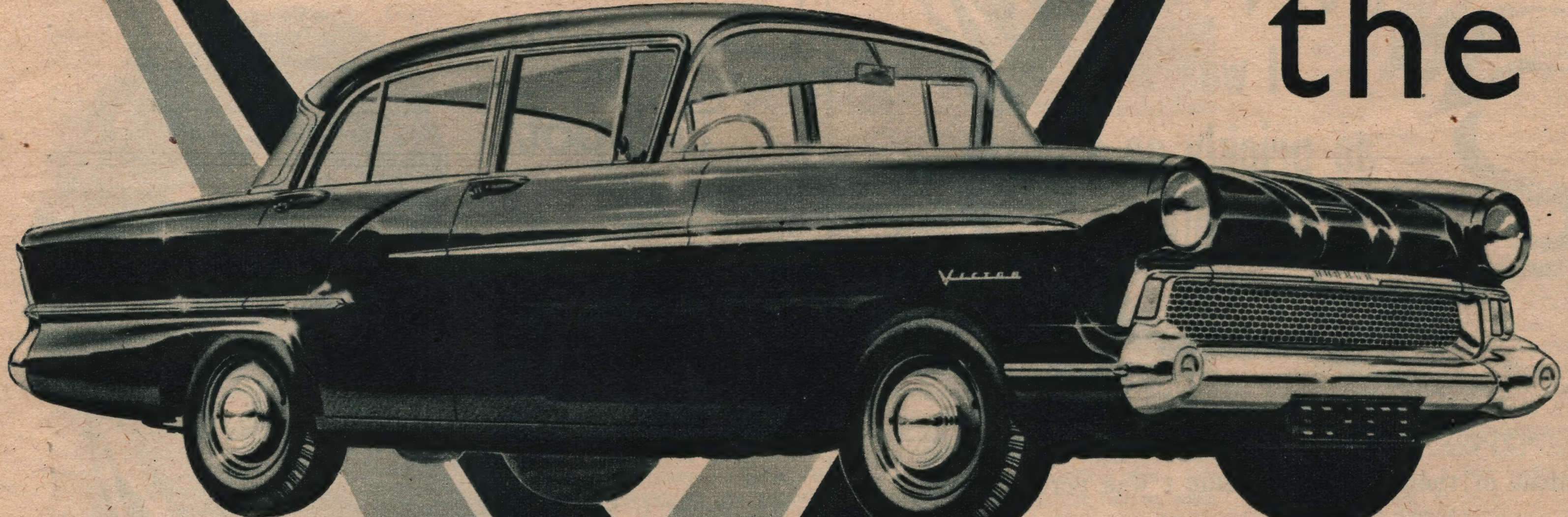
John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

If they hadn't been making such a din they would have heard Mother come in at the front door. Now they're caught, and for Father in Chittock's cover this is ignominious defeat. His plan had been to enforce good order and discipline just in time for his wife's return from her Saturday afternoon hair-do. How was he to know there was half-an-hour's difference between a pin-perm and a shampoo and set? But perhaps his plan was more subtle than that. . . . He knows he will never be left in charge again—so next week he'll be at the football match.

JOHN BULL
Begins this week
THE WHITE WIND
A magnificent new story of the South Seas by
H. E. BATES

Salute the VICTOR



First in its class with all-synchro gears, the Victor sweeps you to 50 m.p.h. in 14½ seconds. Top speed over 75 m.p.h. Phenomenal braking and road-holding. Steering light, precise. Super-Vauxhall petrol economy!

First with panoramic vision! First car in the country with the panoramic windscreen, the Victor's road vision is such that the tips of all four wings can be seen at a glance by the driver. Flat, smooth riding. Luxurious, washable upholstery. Lots of room for four people — and luggage to boot.

First with . . . the new concealed exhaust system . . . the new switching system . . . the easy-release handbrake . . . First for appearance, with the lines of a new generation of low, swift cars — in a range of eight beautiful colours.

First for value . . . The Victor costs only £485 (+ P.T. £243.17.0). The Victor Super £505 (+ P.T. £253.17.0). *The Victor Super has extra luxury features — mechanically the two cars are identical.* See them with the spacious 6-seater Vauxhalls, the Wyvern (4-cylinder) and the Velox and Cresta (6-cylinder), at your local Vauxhall dealer's today.

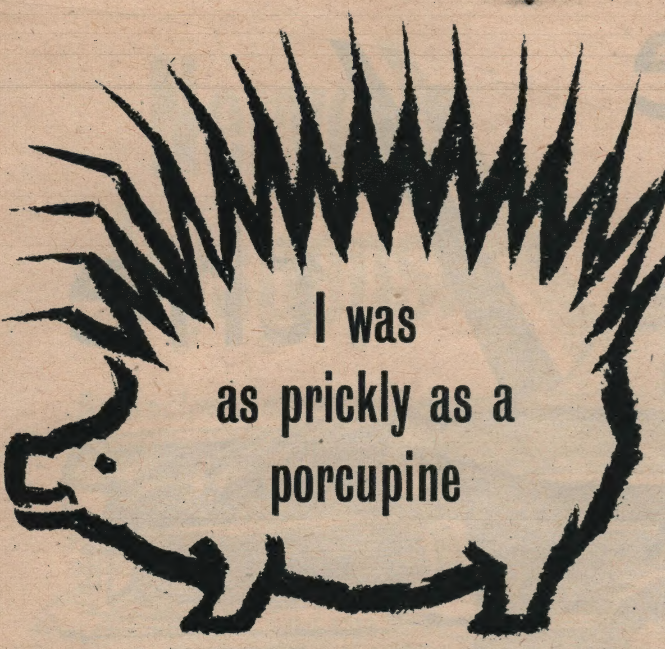
Today your Vauxhall dealer will show you the exciting new four-cylinder four-seater Vauxhall Victor. *See it—and drive it!* For grace and spirit there has never been anything to touch it. The car you'll enjoy is a Vauxhall!

The most exciting motoring news for years!

THE VICTOR
£485
(+ P.T. £243.17.0).

The new VAUXHALL

Vauxhall Motors Ltd., Luton, Beds.



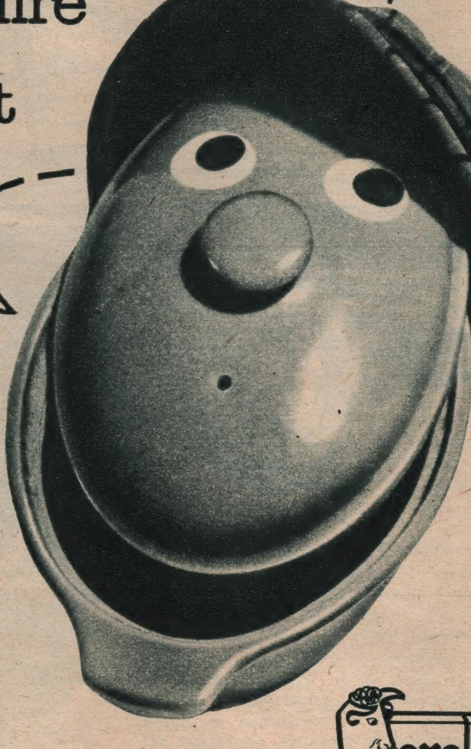
Everybody seemed to be trying to annoy me, and most of them succeeded. But I was persuaded to take D.C.L. Yeast Tablets. Now things go smoothly. All because I now have enough Vitamin B1. If you find things trying, try 'em!

DCL YEAST TABLETS
VITAMIN B1

FROM ALL CHEMISTS · 50 tablets 2/3 · 100 tablets 3/9

CPH 5/56A

When I think of OXO
I feel like a
Lancashire
Hotpot



Who wouldn't? All that tender meat. All those plump tasty vegetables. *And all the flavour brought out by a couple of* OXO *cubes!* By far the best way to put zest into your meat dishes.

OXO–for rousing good appetites

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Over 100 different skills are wanted ranging from the medical to the mechanical. Is yours amongst them?

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And all you do for this is a 15-day camp, doing the job which is your own particular pigeon. The camp is a friendly affair at which you swap hints with skilled men of the same standard as yourself, bring your knowledge up to date, and learn new Army techniques. Your skill will influence your rank and prospects for promotion are good.

Off the job, there are plenty of games and sports going on. Your two weeks with the A.E.R. can be as good as a holiday! So send off the coupon, and get all the details, from:— *The Under Secretary of State, The War Office (M.P.6), London, S.W.1.*

PUT THIS IN THE POST AT ONCE

Please send me—without obligation—the illustrated booklet telling all about the Army Emergency Reserve.

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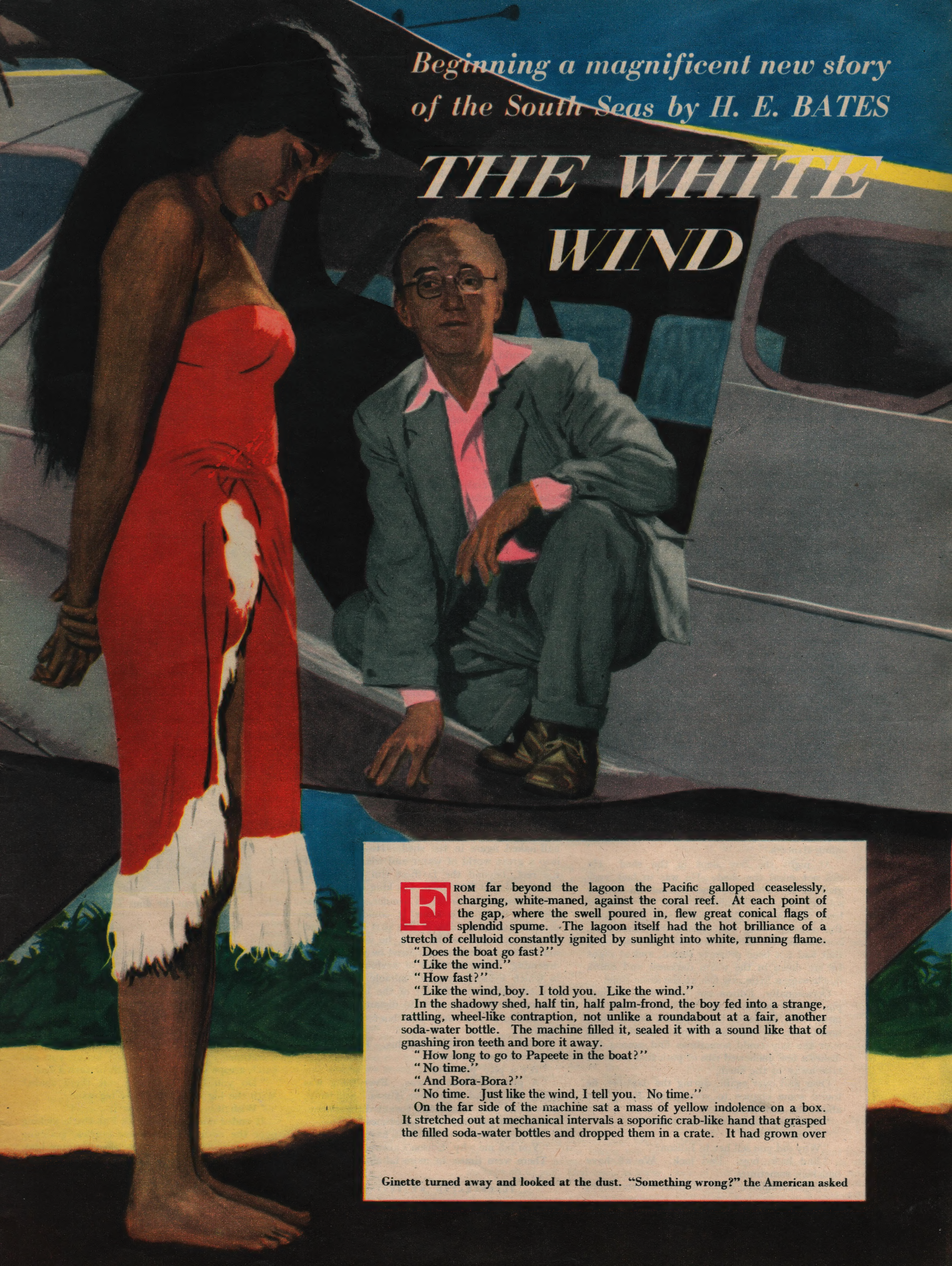
Beginning a magnificent new story of the South Seas by H. E. BATES

THE WHITE WIND



Ginette turned away and looked at the dust. "Something wrong?" the American asked

FROM far beyond the lagoon the Pacific galloped ceaselessly, charging, white-maned, against the coral reef. At each point of the gap, where the swell poured in, flew great conical flags of splendid spume. The lagoon itself had the hot brilliance of a stretch of celluloid constantly ignited by sunlight into white, running flame.

"Does the boat go fast?"

"Like the wind."

"How fast?"

"Like the wind, boy. I told you. Like the wind."

In the shadowy shed, half tin, half palm-frond, the boy fed into a strange, rattling, wheel-like contraption, not unlike a roundabout at a fair, another soda-water bottle. The machine filled it, sealed it with a sound like that of gnashing iron teeth and bore it away.

"How long to go to Papeete in the boat?"

"No time."

"And Bora-Bora?"

"No time. Just like the wind, I tell you. No time."

On the far side of the machine sat a mass of yellow indolence on a box. It stretched out at mechanical intervals a soporific crab-like hand that grasped the filled soda-water bottles and dropped them in a crate. It had grown over the years so completely into the lethargy of this rhythm that occasionally, when it fell asleep in the heat of oppressive afternoons, the hand kept up its fat, slow clawing independently.

The boy knew this mass of distended flesh as Fat Uncle. He knew of no other name than Fat Uncle.

"Fat Uncle, is the boat faster than Pierre's?"

"Pierre, Pierre, who's Pierre? Boat? You call that a boat? That barrel of Pierre's?"

The flesh of the face was so solidly inflated, like a hard tyre, that the simple eyes appeared in it merely as two long slits nicked there by a knife held in a hand that had grown suddenly unsteady as it traced the left-hand eye. This eye seemed not only larger than the other. It slanted upwards and backwards, jaggedly.

The boy's own eyes were black and glistening. He was slightly over four feet in height, rather squat, with thick yellow skin and a mat of black, shining hair that was never combed. There was nothing in these rather inconspicuous features to distinguish him from a score of other boys who ran about the waterfront—except the eyes. They were far-seeing, arrested, solemn eyes and they were inclined to fix themselves for long periods on distances away at sea, without the trace of a smile.

When he was not working with Fat Uncle at the soda-water machine, he spent most of his time working and running errands about the port for an American named Edison. Edison owned, among other things, the soda-water plant. He also owned the tin hut, Fat Uncle, the schooner that Fat Uncle said was as fast as the wind, and an hotel on the waterfront. . . .

"Faster than the wind," Fat Uncle sometimes said. "Faster. Like a hurricane. . . ."

The hotel was a broken-down weather-boarded building with a balustraded upper veranda and a number of open cubicles for drinkers facing the street below. The outside had not been painted for many years, but the cubicles inside were raw with violent scarlet, freshly painted, impressed here and there with what seemed like crude transfers of Polynesian girls, with purple *leis* about their necks and green and yellow bark-shirts, dancing.

Edison was fond of purple. Most days he wore a purple shirt, sometimes with large designs of dragons across it, sometimes with rosettes of vast, purple flowers. This colour threw into sharp relief the thin, balding head, the long neck and the scooped dark cheeks.

On Saturday nights, when the boy spent most of his time helping a Chinaman to wash glasses in the kitchen at the back of the hotel, Edison thumped away at an out-of-tune piano, Fat Uncle played a ukulele, and the floor between the cubicles thundered with sweating, stampeding dancers.

At night the boy slept in the shed. He did not mind the shed. He was in fact very glad of it. The shed had become an almost solitary means of comfort to him. It reminded him always of Fat Uncle and the boat, the schooner that went faster than the wind. Sometimes, too, there was a bottle of soda-water that had not been properly sealed, and at night he lay down in the warm darkness and drank it, chewing a little raw fish at the same time.

Occasionally, Edison got hold of a sucking-pig, invited people to the hotel and gave a big meal, with dishes of hot rice, fish salad, tuna, bread-fruit, shrimps and yams. After it was over the boy could sometimes find among the dishes a few unchewed ribs of pork that he could take away to the shed.

Over and over again, during the daytime, he found some chance to speak with Fat Uncle about the schooner.

"How long was the schooner yours?"

"Years. Years."

"Why did you sell her to Edison?"

"Bad luck, boy. Bad luck. We all have bad luck sometimes."

The accumulated effect of these conversations on the boy was one of wonder. Even when a sudden elephantine hand struck out at him because the soda-water machine had jammed, he was aware of no resentment, no bitterness against Fat Uncle.

For some reason these blows seemed always to strike him on the right-hand side of the face, so that his head appeared to have developed a slight and permanent list to one side. It was this list that gave to his eyes the remarkable impression that he was always listening to half-formed, distant sounds. It deepened his air of being fascinated. It made him seem to regard Fat Uncle as a sort of demi-god, part sinister but full of gripping, fathomless sources of wonder.

"Did you once take her to the Marquesas?"

"Once? Once? About a million times!"

"Samoa? You said you once took her to Samoa?"

"Samoa—I took her everywhere. Over the whole Pacific. The whole world, I tell you. The whole world. Everywhere."

"Tell me about Samoa."

In Samoa, Fat Uncle said, the men were big and vain. The villages were neat and pretty, with big round huts of palm. There was much cocoa, a lot of copra. Lazy and easy, the voyages to Samoa, to pick up cocoa. Good profits. Plenty of dough.

"Where is Noumea? You said you once took her to Noumea."

The yellow crab-like fingers would wave with exhausted disdain in a direction vaguely westerly.

"A million miles that way."

When he spoke of these distances, totally incomprehensible to the boy, who had never even sailed beyond the reef, Fat Uncle would actually open his eyes to their full, simple width, as if the very fact of their being open was proof of candour, and then wave his hand again.

"Look at her. You'd think a man would take her out sometimes, wouldn't you? A man who was a man." A great hand would grab with impatience at a soda-water bottle. A great mouth, with scornful looseness, would spit at the floor. "Look at her. By God, only look at her."

On the dingy waterfront, from which every turn of wind licked up from the many potholes a darting tongue of dust, the schooner lay squat and desolate, listing to one side. She had all the beauty of a floating henhouse dragged from the sea.

"Goes like the wind, I tell you. Like a bird."

As he stared at the schooner and listened to these things, the boy ceased to exist as a mere half-naked figure in the shed. He walked out into a great world of water and islands beyond the reef, beyond the farthest rim of horizon, and found that Fat Uncle was king of it.

The discovery, for all its wonder, was incomplete in itself. He knew it could never be complete until he himself was part of it. And always, at night, in the shed, he would lie for some time awake, however tired he was, openly dreaming, trying to think of devious situations in which Edison, by some miracle, would one day take the schooner out of the harbour and beyond the towering reef, to distant places.

"Couldn't you buy the boat back from Edison?"

"Me? What with? It's his. He owns it. He should take it out."

"It's a pity you sold it."

"A pity—too true it was. Everything was going well. And then there it was. Suddenly. Like I told you. Bad luck. I wanted the money. Every man has bad luck sometimes."

"Perhaps one day Edison will have bad luck."

"You tell me why. Edison's always had luck."

There were times, in more fabulous moments of memory, when Fat Uncle also spoke of fish.

From the door Timi watched Ginett

"Until you get out there"—the disdaining, obese fingers waved to the far corners of the world—"you've never seen a fish. They're like ships, the fish there. Like ships. The sharks have mouths like doors."

"And the wind? You said about the wind."

"The wind will drive you for days. Weeks sometimes. Down to Australia before you can catch a rope or get your breath or turn a hair."

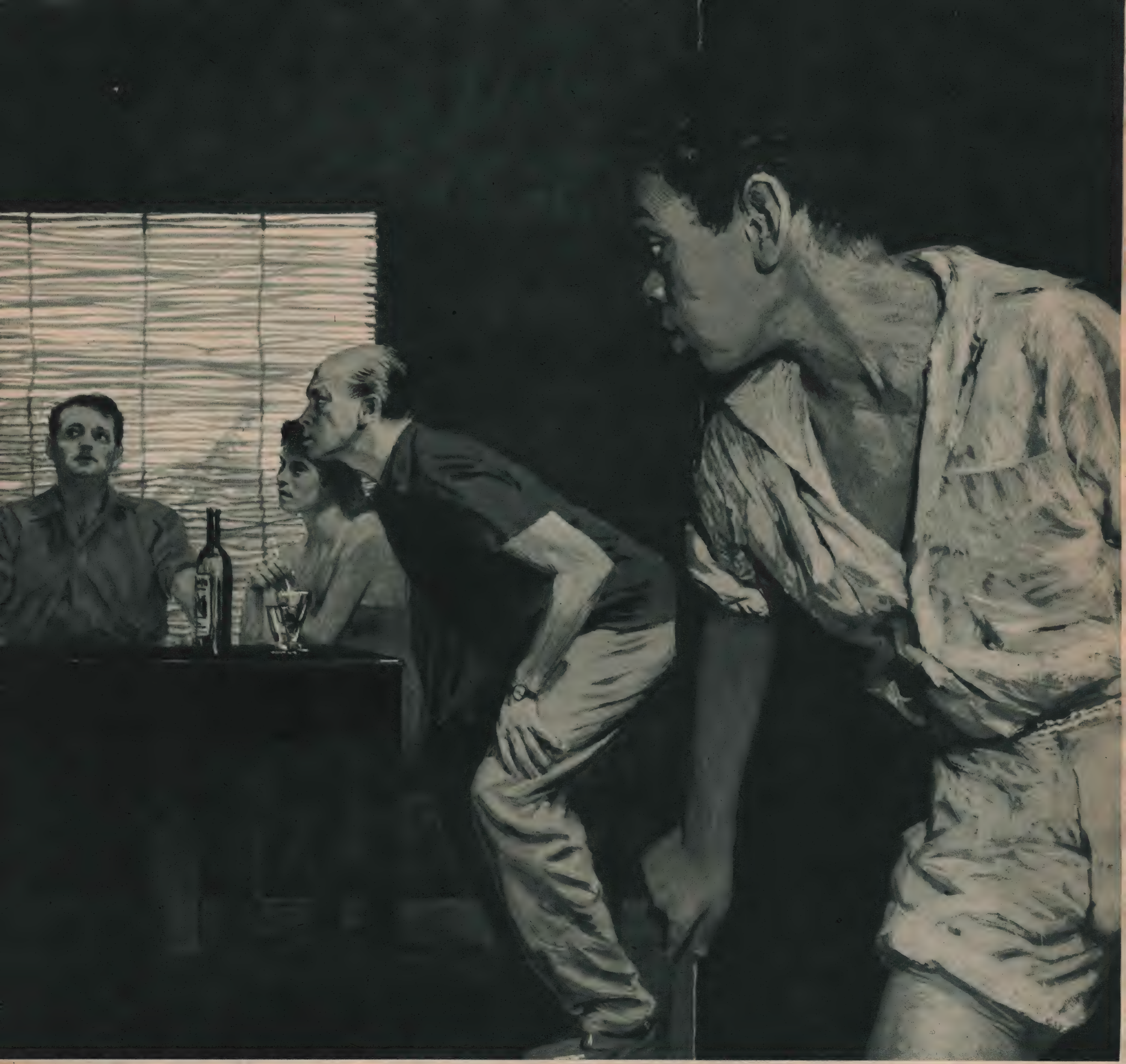
"Do you wish you were out there again? With the big fish? With the big wind?"

"Wish it? By God, wish it . . . !"

It ended one morning with Fat Uncle kicking over the crate of soda-water bottles, grabbing up a bottle as he passed and then heaving himself in outrage towards the door.

"I gave her away. That's the truth of it. Why, I should have got three times as much for

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI



with fascination. She was looking at Edison with calm, proud loathing. "Even Fat Uncle," she said, "has grown up from being a sucking-pig"

her. Four times as much. I gave her away. Six times. He got her out of me." He sucked at the soda-water bottle. "I could prove he got her out of me. Six times as much—that's what I should have got for her."

"You said once the wind blew you for ten days. Were you frightened?"

"Of a thing like that?" Fat Uncle laughed his crackling laugh. "The sea's your friend. I was never frightened."

In the complication of feeling that the schooner was beautiful, that Fat Uncle was never frightened and that Edison was a person of sinister design who had achieved the unforgivable outrage of robbing Fat Uncle of the schooner and laying her up to rot, the boy stood staring at the lagoon with solemn, musing eyes.

A girl in a white-and-crimson *pereu*, with a single yellow hibiscus darting a pistil tongue from her waist-length, blue-black hair, walked a moment later across the waterfront, away from the hotel.

"Ginette, Ginette!" Fat Uncle said. "Look at her. Ginette. They love to call themselves by French names. Where do you suppose she's hurrying off to?"

"To get fish," the boy said. Then, without warning, he suddenly lifted his face. The eyes, darting sideways, caught out of the glittering sky, from the south, a half-formed, distant sound.

A moment later he was running. His voice leaped out in a sudden little yell of surprise that made the girl in the *pereu*, walking across the dusty potholes of the waterfront, suddenly halt and turn.

"It's the day for the little plane," he was shouting excitedly. "It's the day for the little plane."

The girl had disappeared by the time he reached the end of the waterfront, where a belt of palms, very tall, sprang out of a shore of graphite-coloured sand. Beyond these palms the airstrip opened out, a dusty stretch of uneven grass across which the plane was taxi-ing, wings dipping up and down, like a bird faking a wound and limping for cover.

The boy looked more than ever inconspicuous under the tall, thin palms, the fronds of which began to flap above him like steel feathers as the little plane stirred up currents of air.

From the plane came two men, the older, taller one spectacled and rubbery, in a crumpled grey suit, carrying a brown leather bag; the smaller with a pigskin briefcase under his arm, neat

Continued on page 30

A leading expert signposts the way to...

BETTER ROADS FOR BRITAIN

Dr. Thomas Sharp

THOMAS SHARP says that the bill for new trunk roads may be £100,000,000. And that's only a start. Here Dr. Sharp discusses how we can buy roads that are efficient—and beautiful

For twenty or thirty years and more, we have badly neglected the development of the trunk road system in Britain. As a result, we probably now need some three hundred or four hundred miles of new trunk roads to augment the existing eight thousand miles, some parts of which are quite inadequate to meet today's traffic conditions. The London—Midland—Lancashire motorway, which has been under discussion for many years now, is one example of what is needed. A Lancashire—Yorkshire trunk road is a second. And there are others.

This is only a part of the general road problem. Some of the links in our 20,000-mile network of first-class main roads are also now unsuitable for the volume of traffic they have to carry. This is especially true of the roads in or near to big industrial centres; and it applies in particular to most of the weekend escape routes from London. In addition, many of the 70,000 miles of middle-class roads and the 100,000 miles of country roads need local improvement.

All in all, there is a great deal of urgent work to be done; and it will require a lot of money. An arterial road costs about £200,000 a mile—and it may be much more under difficult conditions. We probably need to spend something like £100 million on our trunk roads alone.

But although the problem is a huge and urgent one, it is quite untrue to say that the whole road system in Britain is inadequate and out-of-date. In fact it is probably the fullest and most complete road system in the world.

In Europe or America—to say nothing of the less developed areas—the traveller who gets off the main roads is apt to find himself on rough tracks which we would hardly recognize as public roads at all. But in Britain there is a splendid network of well-surfaced roads (some 200,000 miles in this small island) serving even the most remote localities.. What is needed is a well-balanced system of roads to suit the requirements of various kinds of traffic. And that is what we already have in a very full sense, except that some parts of it have been allowed to get out of date.

Several times a year I drive from Oxford up to County Durham. It is a journey which shows how varied the road pattern is in Britain. And how varied, to my mind at least, it should continue to be.

In the centre of Oxford I leave some of the most beautiful urban streets in the world, and drive along a wide road lined by large Victorian houses and gardens with great trees, giving the sides of the road a park-like feeling.

Leaving the suburbs behind, I get on to a road which might be described as moderately main. It is an A road, but it does not connect large industrial towns, so there is little heavy traffic on it. Its carriageway is, I suppose, about twenty-four or twenty-five feet wide; and that is quite enough in these circumstances. The road runs through pleasant country, well-timbered and nicely diversified as so much English country is. In my seventy or eighty miles on this road I pass through an occasional village and two or three small towns where I have to travel more slowly; but I don't mind this because these places provide incidents which give interest to the journey. I also have to negotiate a number of sharp bends and one or two blind cross-roads, and these I do mind because they produce unnecessary elements of danger.

At the end of this section I pass through the centre of Leicester, a fairly large industrial city. If the passage were easy I should enjoy this for the sake of the major incident it provides in my hours of driving. Even as it is, with the passage sometimes slow and frustrating, I am not sure that on this journey I should use a by-pass if one existed, though I no doubt should if I were on a shorter journey and were pressed for time.

Then for fifteen or twenty miles my road is a pleasant old Roman road, almost dead straight. This is a boring stretch, and I am glad when it is over and I join a fine stretch of road edging the industrial Midlands. It curves gently about for miles through a countryside of woods and great estates. It carries quite a lot of industrial traffic. But its thirty to thirty-five feet wide carriageway (with three traffic lanes) is adequate for driving up to sixty miles an hour for long stretches without strain.

After some thirty miles I join the Great North Road, and very soon I have to face the hideous passage through Doncaster, where it has often taken me an hour to travel three miles. Here I pray for a by-pass to be constructed just as soon as it can be done. From then on, I have the grim grind of A.1—with its heavy traffic, dull scenery, and a carriageway so narrow in parts as to make driving on it a continual strain.

I have described this journey at some length because it very strikingly raises many of the points to be considered in thinking about the future of roads and road transport in Britain. I should hate that journey if I had to travel the whole length of it, or even the greater part of it, on wide, dual carriageway, straight-running roads, by-passing all towns and villages. Even if such roads were available for the whole journey, I should search out lesser roads in some parts, to avoid having to travel too hard and too much under the same conditions.

Where they are properly designed and landscaped, curving majestically through the countryside, dual carriageways can have a kind of nobility. A recent example of such a road is the three-mile length of A.40 (London—South Midlands—South Wales) between Wheatley and Oxford. Here long stretches of the old road have been used for one of the two carriageways; and the other, the new carriageway, sweeps boldly along at varying distances from it, to preserve many fine trees which have been left standing in grass-sward between the two.

Much of the opposition to new roads arises from the idea that they must be ugly or dreary. But there is nothing in the nature of a road, as there is in the nature of a railway track, that makes this inevitable. On the contrary, our new and widened roads can be both beautiful in themselves (or at the very least decent) and, at the same time, a sympathetic rather than an alien element in the places they pass through.

This is especially true in the countryside. It is more difficult in towns, because so much depends on the architecture of the buildings and on the design of the lamp-standards, traffic islands and other "street-furnishings" (and, heaven knows, some of these things, especially the concrete lamp-standards that have been put up in recent years, have been inexcusably nasty). But in the country the elements which can be used to soften the roads and settle them into their settings are natural elements with their own natural beauty—such things as trees and hedges.

There seems to be an obsession with diminutive flowering trees and shrubs—prunus, cherry, laburnum, rhododendron and such like. These trees and shrubs are very pretty and charming in their proper place. But that place is generally the garden or park, and not the town street or the country road or village green.

Mere prettiness in the wrong place can be as bad as downright ugliness. In public places and on public roads we need to aim at simpler and larger effects. Along country roads, whether they are little side-lanes or middling main roads or the great dual carriageway arteries, only the larger trees should be planted—chestnut, lime, plane, sycamore, and the kinds of trees which are common in the surrounding countryside. Even town streets should have only largish trees or none at all. Both in the town and in the country they should, of course, be planted only

The bulk of the traffic clogging Doncaster, like that of many towns, merely passes through on the way to somewhere else. There should be a by-pass, says Sharp

New roads—as built in the United States. But in Britain they must preserve the countryside's beauty

Britain needs three or four hundred miles of new trunk roads. But they do not have to be dreary or ugly. Properly designed, says Dr. Sharp, they can have a kind of nobility

where there is space for them to reach a reasonable growth without having to be hacked out of recognition.

In the very large cities of the world, the traffic problem is now beginning to look almost insoluble, except in terms of forcibly reducing the volume of traffic. We may as well face that straight away. Even in a city such as New York, where it has been possible to drive great wide parkways, overhead roads and tunnel roads in, or near to, the central parts of the city, traffic congestion continues to grow to an intolerable extent. In London, where little or nothing has been done for generations in the way of providing new traffic roads, the problem seems even more intractable.

If enough ground level car parks were created, the city might begin to disintegrate into an enormous, thinly spread, semi-urban wasteland—as has already happened in Los Angeles and other places in America. Parking space in multi-storey buildings may cost at least £500 and even up to £1,000 per car. In either case, traffic must use the streets to get to the car parks, and in most old cities which have grown very large the streets are not wide enough, and cannot in any reasonable way be made wide enough. So, in crowded metropolitan cities, it may come about that private cars will have to be prohibited altogether.

One solution to traffic problems is to attempt to widen the too-narrow streets. But even where the streets have no special architectural character which makes it desirable to preserve them as they are, that must inevitably be a slow business. Though a mere short bottleneck can be removed quickly, it is usually impracticable to widen a long street at a single undertaking.

STREET widenings are often spoken of as likely to take fifty or seventy years. And meanwhile a most wretched effect is created; the building line broken by irrational recessions here and there; raw chunks of walling exposed; untidiness and messiness everywhere. In fact, such widenings practically never get wholly completed: and when they do it has generally taken so long that they are no longer adequate.

Of course, where streets have outstanding architectural character, piecemeal widening, even if it is a solution at all, can only be solution by infinitely slow murder.

If street widening is not practicable, the only solution is to make new by-pass roads. Either the congested streets or the whole town can be by-passed, and which it is best to do will depend mainly on the character of the traffic.

All towns fall between two extreme types. In the first, the bulk of the traffic is merely going through the town to other places: in the second, most of the traffic belongs to the town itself. Doncaster is an outstanding example of the first type of town.

The solution is obvious. The through traffic should be taken out of the town altogether. The town should be by-passed by new roads made in the country at its edge. Fortunately such a by-pass is now being made for Doncaster itself, and similar by-passes are planned elsewhere.

To be attractive to the traffic which it is intended to serve, a by-pass should take as direct a line as possible. It should not be disproportionately longer than the old route which it is to relieve. This generally means that it should swing easily and gently away from the town well beyond its confines. There is a natural temptation, when a town needs by-passes from several directions (which often happens), to attempt to combine the various by-passes into one circular road. But this may well mean a road that is too circuitous and lengthy to attract traffic on to it.

Though Oxford is an example of a town which has a useful by-pass, it is a better example of a town in which the traffic problems of the central streets are created, not by through-traffic, but by traffic that belongs to the town itself. Cambridge is a further example; and there are, of course, a great many others. Surveys have shown that eighty-six per cent of the traffic in the centre of Oxford is the town's own traffic. It is obvious that, in cases such as this, the by-pass will have to be in the centre of the town, and planning it may be a very difficult business.

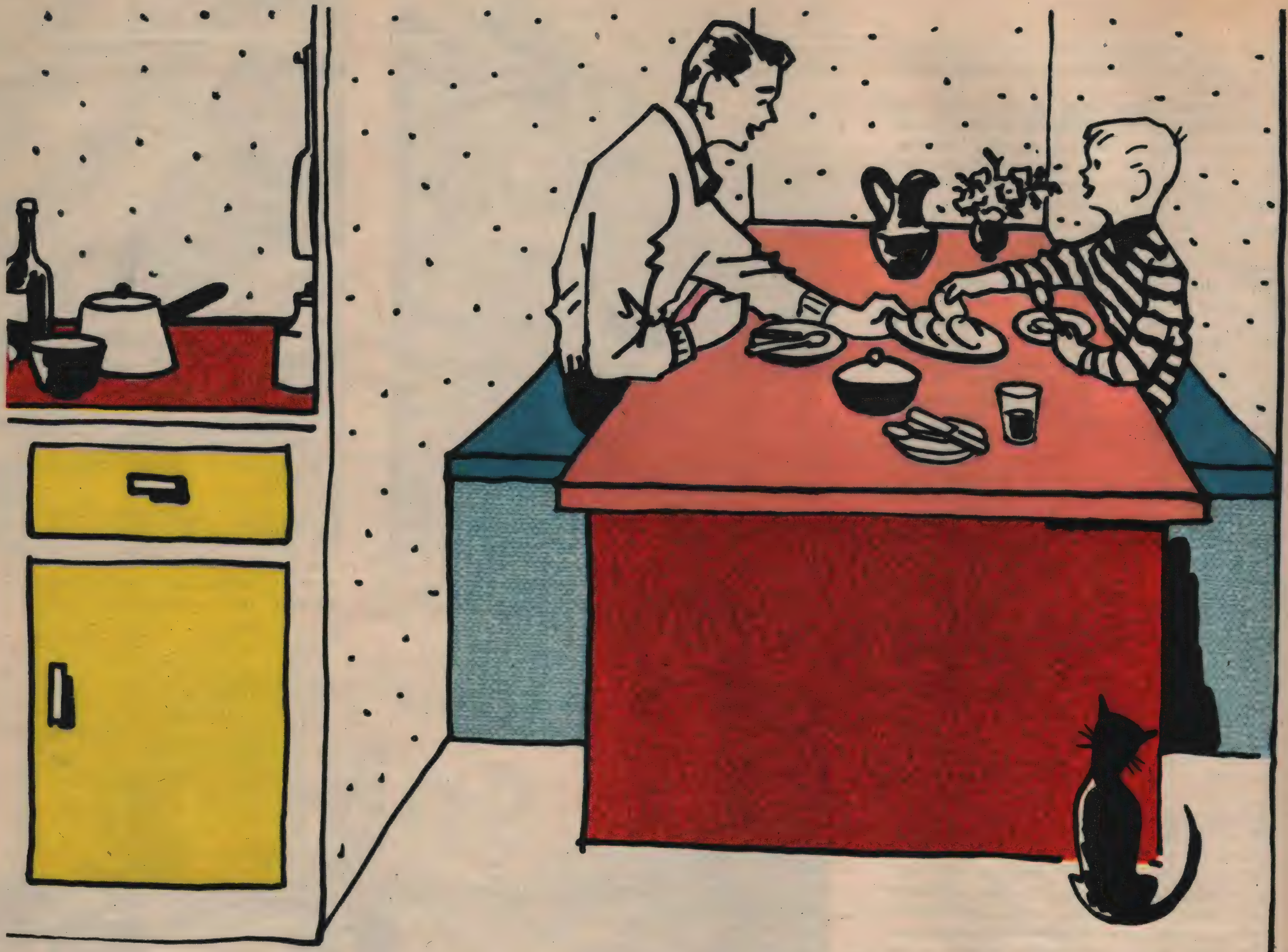
In Oxford, in spite of a controversy that has been going on for years, the solution is clear. The problem arises because there is only one main traffic street in the centre of the city. That street is naturally very congested. It also happens to be one of the greatest architectural streets in the world. A substitute has to be found for it, and a substitute is readily available in a new road running parallel to High Street through an open space three or four hundred yards away. But that open space, Christ Church Meadow, is immensely valued by some people, and there have been loud, long and extremely bitter protests against the alleged vandalism of putting a road through it.

It is of course absolutely right that beauty, and what town planners call amenity, should be protected against avoidable harm, and that there should be strong resistance against unnecessarily disturbing quiet places to relieve over-busy ones.

Every case must be judged in itself. In the case of Oxford the decision is obvious, though it is a painful one to have to take; the sacrifice of the quietness of one out of many quiet places in the city will redeem the finest street of its kind in the whole world, a street of incomparable beauty—and there is no other way of doing it. Such a clear-cut case is extremely rare, however. For one case of necessary and justified damage of this kind there are scores of the opposite. It is true that road building has probably caused more true vandalism in our towns and countryside than almost any other activity.

What it all comes to is this. We need an urgent programme to provide new and improved trunk roads, widenings and improvements to many main and local roads, town by-passes, central town improvements. This work needs to be done with careful regard for the character of the places and scenes which it affects.

The old roads of England before the motor age had themselves much of the unique beauty of the countryside of which they were part. The new roads can have as great a beauty, even if it is of a somewhat different kind. THE END



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Hi-fi discovers the lost chord

by KEITH ELLIS

It brings the concert hall right into the living-room . . . and produces sounds never before heard on a gramophone

Henry Harridge demonstrates a Hi-fi unit. "I cater for serious musicians," he says

SOME time ago a customer returned a recording of Sibelius's first violin concerto to Henry Harridge's record shop and complained that the violinist had left out a number of notes. Harridge, a bald, portly ex-artist with rimless spectacles and a cleft chin, played it through on an ordinary radiogram. He had to agree that certain bass passages were inaudible.

"Let's try it on Hi-fi," he suggested.

The customer, though not Harridge, was surprised when the missing notes came through clear and strong.

"People are amazed when they hear Hi-fi for the first time," says Harridge. "It's completely unlike anything they've heard before. This chap was so impressed he decided to buy a set."

Hi-fi—high fidelity—is one of the liveliest branches of the booming electronics industry. At last year's Audio Fair, organized by a group of manufacturers and almost exclusively devoted to Hi-fi equipment, five thousand visitors were expected. Between 17,000 and 20,000 turned up.

This year the organizers are making preparations for 30,000. The number of firms exhibiting has gone up from forty-one to fifty-two.

Besides old-established radio firms like Pye, Philips and E.M.I., they include a majority of smaller manufacturers, many of whom are now known in many foreign countries.

Wharfedale, which manufactures loudspeakers, had so many orders from America that its assembly plant was unable to cope with them. Besides marketing complete loudspeakers, its U.S. agent is now setting up a factory to assemble additional parts in America. Leak, which exports seventy per cent of its production but was having difficulty with Brazilian import regulations, is negotiating with a Brazilian firm to manufacture its amplifiers under licence.

Altogether, British Hi-fi manufacturers are estimated to be exporting about £6,000,000 worth of equipment a year.

In Britain, the number of homes now equipped with Hi-fi is probably approaching the 100,000 mark. A magazine devoted to Hi-fi started last June with five thousand copies. Its printing order for April, 1957, is ten thousand. It also published a year book which sold ten thousand copies.

Harridge, who runs one of a small number of record shops in London and the provinces which specialize in Hi-fi, became interested late in 1949. At that time, long-playing records (L.P.s) were just coming on to the British market.

Gramophone enthusiasts have always striven after faithful reproduction, and L.P.s made modern Hi-fi possible. Traditional records recorded only a limited range of frequencies. The lower notes of bass instruments and the higher notes of such instruments as the violin and piccolo were poor in quality. For technical reasons, however, a much wider range can be recorded on L.P.s.

A good orthodox record-player will reproduce almost every sound on the traditional record. But to get the full range of sound recorded on an L.P., special instruments are necessary. These constitute Hi-fi.

The combination of L.P.s and Hi-fi produced sounds which had never previously been heard from a gramophone.

"What staggered people at first," says Harridge, "was the clarity of the triangle. The piano gained tremendously and there was a much better rendering of heavy stuff, such as choral and organ music."

A Hi-fi set consists of a series of parts which are often bought separately. The key is the amplifier with its set of controls. One switch makes it possible to correct the known peculiarities of various makes of records. Two knobs control the treble and bass. These enable you to counterbalance room conditions. Soft furnishings absorb the upper registers. Lino and leather result in harsher sound. You can correct for these. You can also suit the sound to your personal taste."

Once an elderly man listened to a demonstration in Harridge's shop. The previous customer had set the bass control at its highest and the treble at its lowest. The elderly man reversed the positions and remarked: "At my age, your hearing gets a bit shaky in the higher frequencies."

THE Hi-fi set must have a heavy turntable, which prevents vibration, and a special motor which ensures that it rotates it at a constant speed.

The pick-up, carefully matched to the amplifier, should be capable of reproducing all the frequencies it receives from the record and amplifier. The loudspeaker must be absolutely distortion-free and have a cabinet designed to give correct tone balance. "The loudspeaker and the motor must be housed separately," says Harridge. "If not, the vibrations from the motor interfere with the loudspeaker."

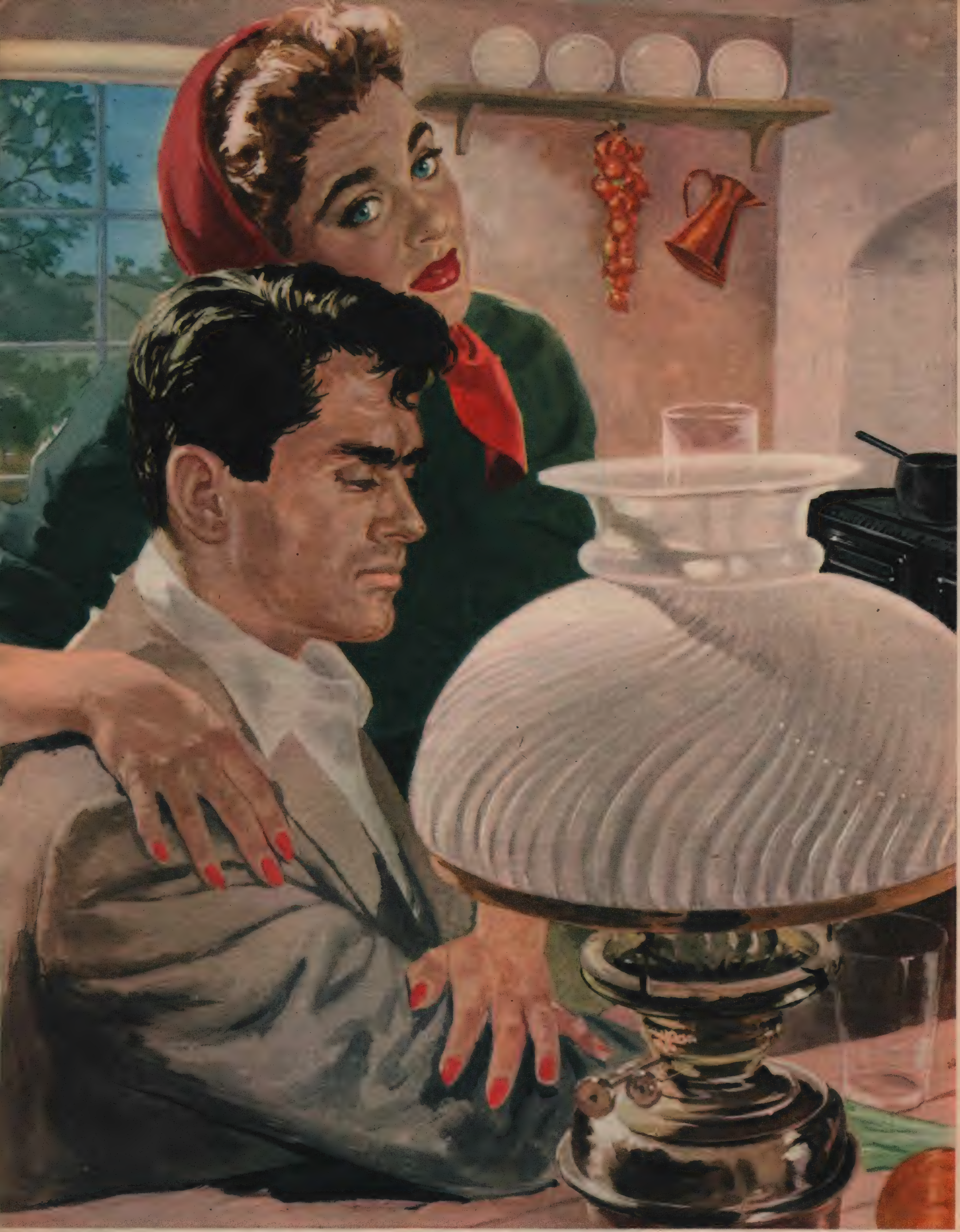
Hi-fi sets can be built up for anything between £50 and £500. Harridge sells a complete set, including fitting in the home anywhere in England, for about £80. "After that, even a slight improvement can cost £40 or £50."

Hi-fi enthusiasts come from all social classes. They include a majority who treat it as just one more amenity of modern civilization and a small minority who are interested less in music than in the perfect reproduction of sound.

"I cater for serious musicians," says Harridge, "and for people who go to concerts and operas and want to reproduce similar sounds in their own homes. The cranks are a pain in the neck. Even if you do manage to sell them something, they're never satisfied."

THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON



"You're not broke," Janet said. "Maybe next year will be fine and hot." Tom groaned. "Maybe next year I shan't be here"

Tom was worthless—and all the dale knew it. There could be no wedding till he had weathered the . . .

Storm over Hollowground

by DUDLEY HOYS

At the time his father died, young Tom Kennedy had just started courting Janet Todd. Everybody in the dale thought they would be wed in a matter of months. It seemed a sensible guess, because Tom had lost his mother years since, and there was nobody to run the house at Hollowground while he carried on with the farming.

Folk reckoned Janet would make a grand wife for Tom—calm and capable and kindly. She was good to look at too, strongly built and shapely, with steady grey eyes and a pale yet healthy face that old Joe Dixon, Tom's neighbour, likened to a bowl of cream.

But the greening weeks of spring went sliding past and, although they saw each other often, there was no news of the wedding date being fixed.

Some folk put it down to the bout of flu that had bowled Tom over in January, and said it had left him with a kind of depression that would take a long while to shake off. Next, it leaked out that Tom's father had left practically nothing, and there was a heavy mortgage on Hollowground.

On top of these troubles, Tom had a run of bad luck. In late March the promising weather switched over to wickedness, and at lambing time it was dry-cold and starving. Later, when sunshine was needed for the hay, those vital days turned limp and sodden.

Then, one night in August, a gale fairly ripped down Iredale, and anybody with a grain crop must have stirred in bed and cursed that flailing wind.

Next morning Joe Dixon was passing Hollowground. He saw Tom standing by a gate, staring at his three acres of corn. It lay battered and flat and, by the expression on his face, Tom might have been wanting to bury himself underneath it.

Old Joe attempted some consoling remarks. After all, corn was a bit of a luxury in these parts and sheep were the mainstay. A chap had to accept the worst that evil weather could do and take it with a shrug. And, anyway, there was the chance of a fine spell coaxing the stalks upright.

Tom said wearily: "What's the use?"

Janet appeared on her bike. Her eyes had a sort of inward worry about them. Joe knew that look was caused by something more than a field of damaged corn. Losing heart, Tom had taken recently to visiting the Fox a lot for comfort, spending what he could ill afford and trying to bolster himself with the wrong kind of spirit.

Janet jumped off her bike, surveyed the damaged field, and laid a hand on his arm. She said: "It might be worse, Tom."

His empty laugh was discouraging. "Nay, what's the use?"

Joe said: "Cheer up, lad. You'll get over it." He went on down the dale, and Janet's hands crept up to Tom's shoulder. She said: "'Tisn't any good brooding, my dear."

Tom said: "I'm a failure."

"Don't talk so feckless. Bad weather's no fault of yours. Things'll come right, you see."

Tom's thin face wrinkled with bleak amusement. He said: "You've got a gey lot more faith in me than I have meself. Dunno why."

"That's because I believe in you," she said gently. "I know you're hard up. But I'm willing to marry you any time if——"

He shook his head. "Nay, nay. I'm not as rotten as that, to expect a lass to take on a chap who can't offer her owt but debts——"

Janet said with quiet challenge: "All right. I admire you for that. But you can't put things straight unless you pull yourself together. Stop going to the Fox. Stop moaning over bad luck. Try hoping instead."

Her love and encouragement rallied Tom for a while. But it was as if Fate itself had a feud against him. Two of his Shorthorns got redwater, and he found it out too late. He lost seventeen of his Herdwick ewes from maggot-fly, though they had been dipped only a few weeks previously.

But what hit him hardest was the disaster to his hay. Being high up the dale, he suffered much more from the wet spell than folk nearer the coast. He had to cut late, and for weeks it was too wet even to pike on tripods. A spate on the Ire sent its waters swilling across his biggest field, and practically every wisp was swept off downstream.

On the day when the hay was swept away, Janet called to see Tom and found him sitting at the kitchen table, his chin in his hands, just staring dumbly at nothing. She slid her arms around his neck and kept saying with soft pleading: "Tom! Don't—don't!"

He muttered: "All the work through last backend . . . the muck-spreadin' . . . the cuttin'. Ay, an' the turning wi' side-delivery rake. If I did it once, I did it a dozen times. All for nowt."

"You're not broke," Janet said. "Maybe next year will be fine and hot."

Tom groaned. "Maybe next year I shan't be here. Maybe I'll get taken on some spot as a hired man. 'Tis all I'm fit for."

She said almost fiercely: "No! Don't talk like that," and Tom dropped away into silence, while Janet pictured what it would be that evening.

He would go to the Fox and fuddle himself, to escape his worries for a few hours, and she could hardly blame him. But that could lead only one way in the end. It would mean saying goodbye to Hollowground, perhaps to Iredale. It would mean his losing the last remnants of faith in himself.

She glanced out of the window at the high, crumpled fells. Though the day was grey, the cloud had a tall ceiling, and distant peaks and ridges were visible, floating in the air as a misty silver-brown. The seas of bracken shone vivid emerald in the greyness, and the becks descending the breasts trailed like white lace.

She said: "Tom, it 'ud hurt to leave this, wouldn't it?"

"Aye, it would. But——"

"I'd not be happy anywhere else—though I'd try to be, for your sake."

That went home. He muttered: "Caps me how you can bother about a rotten chap like me."

"You're not rotten. It's just that one thing after another has pulled you down and down. You've lost courage. And Tom, you won't find it at the Fox—not the right kind."

He flushed, and nodded. "You ought to wed a better 'un than me, lass. You deserve it."

"You're the man I want to wed. Nobody else. And this bad luck you've been having won't go on for ever. It'll turn. You see."

"I wish I could hope. I seem to have lost the trick of it."

She laughed, and ruffled his hair. "Then I'll have to teach you how to get it back."

Janet kept Tom from the Fox that night, but it was only a flash in the pan. He was soon back at his old habits, coming home late in the evenings, fuddled and stupid, and in the mornings setting out on his daily work without relish, depressed and heavy. And the weather remained shocking, with rain and yet more rain. It looked as if his remaining hay would never get led.

Hope beamed suddenly on September 7, the day before the Gillingdale Show. The way the skies faired up was marvellous. Tom borrowed Joe Dixon's tractor and chugged away until nearly dark, turning the drenched swathes.

Wanting to be helpful, Joe said: "I hear Jack Wilson's offered you a lift to Gillingdale tomorrow."

"Aye. But——"

"Well, lad, you go. 'Twill be a change. I'll

Continued on page 38

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

THREE STEPS FORWARD–4

A holiday abroad—and dinner in Soho

by VERA DEAN

Doctors said I was helpless . . . but I taught myself independence. Now I have visited France, flown in a plane, and been to an after-theatre party

At a holiday camp, Vera entered a fancy dress contest as Madame Butterfly. She won second prize—plus a kiss from an "Indian prince"

I HAD escaped from the hospital for incurables. This had seemed the only place to send me when I grew too old to be kept in the special unit run by Mrs. Eirene Collis at Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton, Surrey. I am a "spastic"—a girl with cerebral palsy—and Mrs. Collis's new ideas on training the cerebral palsied had given me hope of one day becoming independent and of use in the world, in spite of my handicaps of defective movement, including speech.

That dream seemed to have ended when I was put into the hospital for incurables, the fate I most dreaded. But after I had been there for three months my mother, who lived on a widow's pension, helped by my sister Gladys's earnings, got a flat in North London—and I went home.

When I had been home for about eighteen months the Ministry of Labour sent me notice to attend at a hospital to see if I was fit for employment. Mother asked my Aunt Queen, who lived nearby, to come with us.

I looked forward to the interview because I thought it would open the door of a training college to me. I had visions of becoming a typist or a dressmaker, not because I wanted to become a typist or a dressmaker but because I thought the knowledge would be useful when the time came for me to help cerebral palsied people. However, now that I sat in front of the small, bald-headed man who was chairman of the examining committee, I found these visions were just another pipe-dream. The bald-headed man addressed all his remarks to Mother—I believe he thought I was incapable of opening my mouth or was half-witted.

"Now, Mrs. Dean, what can your daughter do?"

"She can make very fine knotted belts and she is beginning to use a typewriter. She is not very expert just yet but she is improving."

"Can she knit or sew?"

"No, not yet. The specialist at the hospital told her she was not ready for those things."

The doctors took one look at me and announced: "We are very sorry, Mrs. Dean. Your child will never be able to earn her own living, and it is no use trying to train her to do something at home because she will never be capable of doing anything."

ALL this time Aunt Queen, sitting beside me, was getting redder and redder in the face. Eventually she could stand it no longer and she spoke her mind.

"I've known Vera since she was a baby and I know the progress she has made with very little schooling. She can read and type, and while she was in hospital she was trained, so why can't she be trained now?"

The answer was: "We've tried to train people like Miss Dean before, but it's a waste of time. Good afternoon!"

A very cross Aunt Queen caught hold of my arm and said: "Come on, Vera and Bert" [Mother's nickname]. "It's no use staying here."

We marched out in silence.

"It would have been nice," said Mother, "for you to have been trained for something, but you are all right at home. I can always find you plenty to do."

Yes, I thought, *but will it always be the same? Why did God make me as I am?—surely it was to do something. But how can I help other people if first of all I'm not given a chance to prove what I can do myself?*

Independence was the goal at which I aimed; a goal which seemed to come no nearer. . . .

One of Mother's ambitions was to go abroad

Vera and her cousin Sylvia relax on a beach. When Vera went to France she walked alone on to a ship—regarded as "impossible" for her

Stairs were another fearful barrier to Vera. By practice and determination, she has learned to go up and down them confidently and quickly

for a holiday, and, in 1952, she and Gladys arranged to go to Paris for a week if I could find someone to look after me during that time. I told Mrs. Collis and she immediately said: "Why don't you come back to the unit for a week?"

I enjoyed my holiday at the unit, renewing old friendships and making new ones; playing with the children and watching them doing their work.

There were two teachers in the schoolroom and I smiled to myself when I saw this; for, when I had lived in the unit, I had helped to teach the children. *That proves I did the work of a normal person,* I thought.

At the end of the week, Mrs. Collis asked if I would like to stay a little longer as she liked having me around.

"People don't normally like having me around," I laughed, "but I'd love to stay for a few more days."

I wrote to Mother to ask her not to take me home for a little while. A few days later, as I was walking from the treatment-room, I slipped and fell heavily, spraining my ankle. I had to be helped to bed, where a cold compress was put on it. I couldn't stand for the next few days, and I spent most of the time sitting in a wheel chair in the nursery, watching the children at play.

The day after the accident, Mrs. Collis came to me and said, smiling: "I am sorry you've hurt your foot. Of course, now you'll have to stay here until you are better."

When the foot was beginning to get better I tried to walk into the nursery and found it very painful. As I hobbled along, leaning on the wall, one of the children came towards me. His name was John. He was six years old and he had a very bad handicap, but he loved playing in his toy car—it was the only way he could get around. He pedalled up and said something which I could not understand very well.

Kneeling beside him, I asked: "What did you say, John? I did not quite hear you."

"I said let me help you."

"But, John, how can you help me? I am a lot bigger than you."

"I can help you," he insisted. "Lean on the bonnet of my car and I will take you to a chair. You will not hurt the car. Daddy sits on it sometimes."

I had doubts about the wisdom of sitting on the car, but after his thoughtfulness I could not refuse. I sat down gingerly and held on carefully, but I needn't have been so nervous because John drove as carefully and slowly as if my life depended upon him. . . .

I was at the unit for a month, and when I went home, life seemed quiet in comparison.

In the summer evenings Gladys and I would go cycling—with me riding my favourite old tricycle. We would ride through all the back streets where there was very little traffic.

Cycling for pleasure was a wonderful pastime, but I could not cycle too far or too quickly, or go alone, so for long distances I had to rely on other people taking me by bus or train.

ONE particular bus journey I have good cause to remember. It was soon after Christmas, and Mother, Gladys and Aunt Queen were taking me to a party given by the Invalid Tricycle Association. I had been given a pair of nylons as a present, my very first pair, and as Gladys helped me to put them on she uttered a warning to be careful not to catch them on anything.

The party was being held in a part of London with which we were unfamiliar and Mother asked the bus conductor to tell us when we came to our stop. It was a Saturday afternoon and hundreds of people were doing their shopping when we stopped in a busy street and the conductor said: "Get off here."

A crowd of people jostled off the bus while we waited till the last so as not to be in their way. Then Gladys and Aunt Queen took my arms to help me off. Gladys got off first and I had one foot on the platform and one in the road when suddenly the bus started moving.

"Help!" screamed Mother. "My daughters are being dragged along the road."

"Stop the bus!" yelled Aunt Queen.

"Hang on!" shouted Gladys, as, still clutching my arm, she was pulled along the road on her stomach.

A horrible minute passed. Then Aunt Queen let go of my other arm and I fell into the road on top of Gladys just as the bus pulled up.

Mother was still yelling at the conductor, and now Aunt Queen told the driver what she thought of him as a crowd of curious spectators left their Saturday afternoon shopping to see what all the fuss was about.

A man helped me to my feet and then, thinking I was normal, let go, and I immediately fell flat in the road again. Gladys picked herself up, took one look at the man's horrified expression and burst out into peals of hysterical laughter. Mother and Aunt Queen still argued with the driver and conductor, while Gladys and I just sat there in the road and laughed and laughed.

Gladys explained to the man, who was still looking aghast, that I had a handicap which made it difficult for me to stand up alone and that I really hadn't hurt myself, and then we brushed the dust from our clothes and went on to our party.

On arrival there we went into the cloakroom to wash some of the dirt off, and I looked at my knees and burst into tears.

"What's the matter—you are not really hurt, are you?" asked Gladys as she searched for some hidden injury.

"My nylons, my lovely nylons!" I sobbed as I looked at the tangled mass hanging around my legs.

Both knees were grazed, but I did not notice the blood: all I could see was the mass of broken and tattered threads where my beautiful stockings had been.

"Don't worry," Gladys coaxed as she bathed my knees. "That is the first pair of nylons you have had and it will probably be the last for some time, but I will sue the bus company for the damage and then you can have something else with the money."

Her claim was met without argument for the cost of the stockings and repairs to her watch, which had been damaged in the fall, but it was some time before we had enough confidence to venture on a bus again.

About this time a branch of a recently formed society called "The Friends and Parents of Spastics" was opened in North London and we became active members. Once a month there

love at first sight

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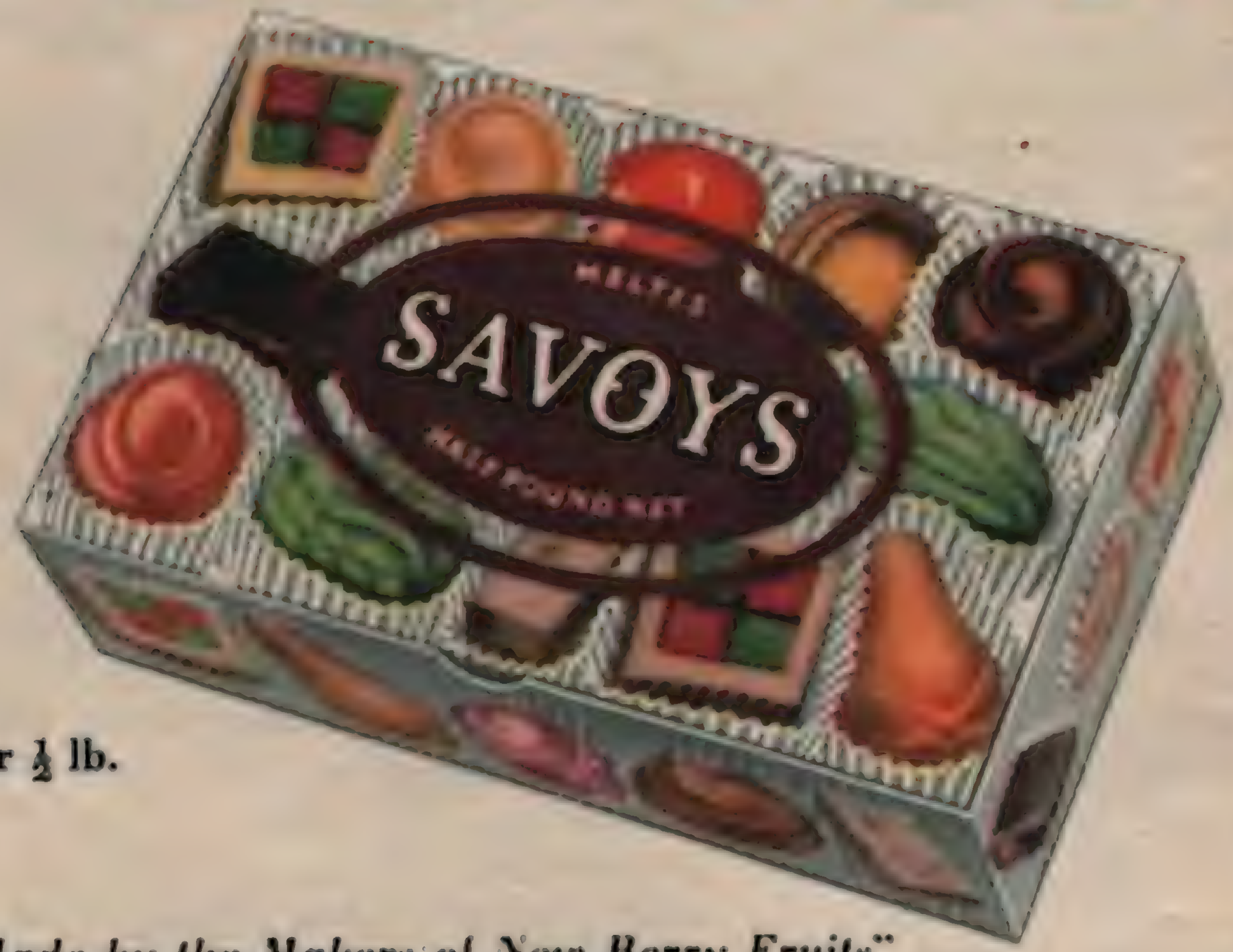

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Vera, her sister Gladys and brother-in-law Ron. "I was jealous of Ron at first," Vera admits

was a social evening, where we all joined in a sing-song and dance.

It was good fun, though probably bad for our movement, to be able to "let our hair down" among other handicapped people and their families, and we all joined in the merriment as best we could. If any strangers had walked into the hall they would probably have had a shock to see our weird and jerky movements as we tried to dance, or to hear our croaky voices as we joined in a favourite song, but nobody in the hall minded what anyone else looked like and we all had a jolly good time.

But the time I looked forward to most of all was Sunday morning. Gladys and I had joined a swimming club for handicapped people. If, like myself, you could not swim, there was always somebody to teach you. It was interesting to watch the people who could swim in spite of their difficulties. As I sat making belts in the evenings, I would look forward to Sunday and all the fun we would have. Then I would look at Gladys sitting in the armchair knitting and wish that I could knit.

EVER since I can remember, people had told me I would never be able to knit. But one day Mother came back from her shopping with a very large pair of wooden needles.

"These are for you. I am going to teach you how to knit."

Oh, well, I thought, *there is no harm in trying, but it will probably be a waste of time.*

After tea we sat side by side with a big ball of carpet wool and these outsize needles.

"You can start by making a knitted slip mat and see how you get on," Mother said as she cast on a number of stitches. She knitted the first few rows and then gave it to me.

"Please don't watch me, Mum. It puts me off," I pleaded. "Let me do it in my own way."

After a few minutes I made my first stitch. The joy of achievement gained with that first stitch remained with me for days.

Gradually I progressed to knitting on smaller needles and with finer wool, and was immensely proud the day I finished my first bed-jacket. Since then I have made a number of articles but knitting is not one of my favourite hobbies, because, for me, it is too slow and monotonous.

The days at home passed uneventfully until holiday time came around once again. I had joined a society called "The Spastic Fellowship," and when the society decided to spend a get-together week at a holiday camp in Blackpool we went along.

About thirty of us arrived at the camp. Half were cerebral palsied children and young adults and the other half were relatives. The people at the camp went out of their way to make our holiday a success, and instead of the pitying looks we usually receive in strange places we were given a bright smile and a helping hand.

The camp was near an airfield and one day we all decided to go for a 10s. joy ride. Our plane rose gracefully into the air and out over the sea. As we turned to go back towards Blackpool Tower I saw the tip of the wing, through the window, and my stomach seemed to come up to my mouth. But the feeling didn't last. I was too excited by this new experience to be worried for long.

After a very happy week Friday came all too soon, and, with it, the fancy dress parade.

"What are you going as?" asked the mother of one of the children in our party.

"Oh, I am not going in it. I have nothing to wear," I said.

"Well, I have a kimono in my chalet; I wear it as a dressing-gown, but if you would like to borrow it you could dress up as a Japanese lady."

"Oh good!" I replied enthusiastically. "I will go as Madame Butterfly."

Gladys made paper flowers for my hair, a paper fan to carry and rosettes to decorate the wheels of my invalid chair, and, dressed in the kimono, I was taken into the dance hall.

Soon it was my turn to parade and I felt rather silly and shy as Gladys pushed me round the hall. I held the fan in front of my face and peeped coyly over the top and everyone thought it was part of the act. We came to the end of the hall and stood in line with the other competitors waiting for the judges' decision. Next to me was a large man dressed as an Indian prince.

"If you win, I'll kiss you," he laughed.

"All right, and I'll do the same if you win."

The announcer called through the microphone: "First, the Indian Prince! Will His Royal Highness kindly step this way?"

He went up to the stage and the band played "Indian Summer."

"Second, Madame Butterfly!"

There was a spontaneous burst of applause as the band struck up "One Fine Day," and I went forward to receive my prize.

"What do we do now?" joked the Indian prince. "We have both won. Do we kiss each other?"

"Why not?" I laughed as he gave me a congratulatory hug.

BACK at home the children in the flats were becoming increasingly noisy and rude. A number of them had got into the habit of standing outside our french windows and staring in while we were having meals.

The nervous tension which this produced, coupled with the fact that I was not now getting sufficient fresh air, helped to make me anaemic and I started to lose weight. My normal weight is seven and a half stone, but in a short time I was down to less than six stone and I felt I had no energy to do anything. The doctor called every week for months and prescribed pills and milk foods which stopped me from getting worse but did not noticeably improve my health.

Eventually Mother decided that the only answer to the problem was to move away from the flat and get a house in the country. We could not afford to buy a house so we asked the London County Council to transfer us to one of their out-of-London estates.

The time was May, 1953. Eagerly we watched every post in the hope that the transfer would not be long delayed. June came and went and now it was July and soon it would be time for me to go camping with the Rangers. Then, one morning, the long-awaited letter arrived, asking Mother to go on the following Tuesday to view a new house at Merstham, in Surrey. She went to see it, and arranged for us to move there in a fortnight's time.

There were difficulties to be faced. For one thing the rent was higher, and then expenses would be greater because there were no markets near Merstham for cheap shopping. It would also mean that I would have to give up my swimming club, and Gladys would have to travel about three hours each day to get to and from her job in London and her fares would cost about an extra £1 a week. Even so, we considered these sacrifices worth while if we could have a little peace and quiet and could enjoy the privacy of a small garden.

For the next two weeks we were very busy packing and throwing out all the useless things that somehow accumulate in cupboards. At the same time I was preparing to go to camp; uniform, underwear and bed linen all had to be marked with my name and pressed and packed.

The removal was planned for a Monday and I was due to go to camp the following day, so Aunt Queen invited me to stay for a couple of days with her and her husband, my Uncle Len, in their large ground-floor flat—so that I would not be in the way at home.

It meant that I would go straight to camp from her flat and that I would not see our new home until I returned a fortnight later; but arrangements for my transport to camp had all been made from London and this seemed the best plan.

I have been to camp many times since leaving the women's hospital and have enjoyed them all, but I well remember the first occasion when I didn't want to go at all. I thought that camping with a lot of handicapped girls would be rather like living in hospital, and I was never more surprised in my life than on that first trip to "Woodlarks," at Farnham, Surrey.

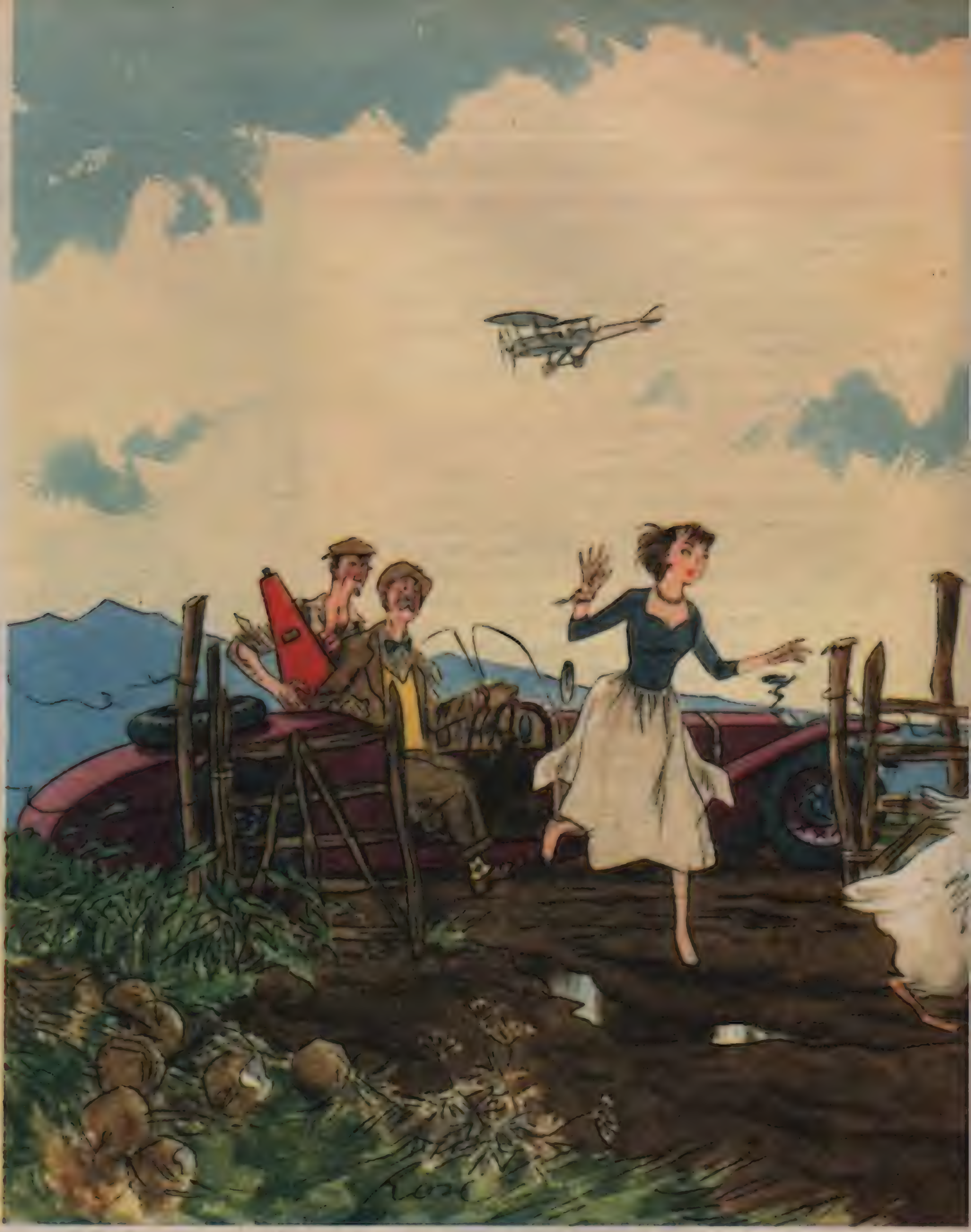
I felt very miserable in my new, navy-blue uniform, sitting in a wheel chair at Waterloo Station, among all the strange faces. There were

Continued on page 40

The Poet and the Pilot

by KEM BENNETT and CHARLES BEATTY

To be sure, it was a flying club for lunatics. . . . And Patrick needed a touch of madness to keep his girl



"Oh Patrick!" Marion shouted. "Are you hurt, my darling?

When they came to the sign, Patrick Tennessy stopped reciting poetry and pulled the car into the side of the road. The small, nicely shaped girl beside him was rapt; she paid attention neither to the sign nor the airfield, only to the long, lean Patrick. "Pat," she said, sighing deliciously. "Darling, you have a silver tongue."

Patrick felt the thud of adoration as it caught him in the ribs. He leaned across, breathing hard, took young Marion by the shoulders and kissed her. There was no doubt that she liked it.

"Well," said Patrick, after a while, "we're here."

"Where?" she asked absently.

"At the airfield, sweetheart. Remember?"

"The airfield!" Marion creased her forehead. Then she giggled. "Empty-headed thing that I am," she said. "I was to take flying lessons, wasn't I?"

"Only if you really want to, my heart."

"Ah, but I do."

The sign was by no means new. DUNMALAOGH FLYING SCHOOL AND CLUB it announced in faded emerald letters upon a whitish ground. *Proprietor: Squadron-Leader Terence Maguire, D.S.O., D.F.C., R.A.F. (Retd.).* And below, stencilled letters on a strip of bog-wet paper added an afterthought: *Cars and Aircraft Bought and Sold.*

There was a cinder patch outside the clubhouse, which was an ex-British Army barracks hut. Patrick parked his small car there, alongside a monstrous but ravaged sports car with a sneer upon its face. He then helped Marion from her seat and they went together hand-in-hand to the open door of the clubhouse, stepping over a single strand of sagging wire strung on posts that encircled it.

A notice above the door said, MEMBERS ONLY, and another beside it recommended all comers to insure with The Emerald Isle Life and Accident Insurance Company.

Patrick was frowning. He stuck his head through the door. "Hallo! Good day to you! Who's there?"

There was no answer. "There must be someone around, surely," said Marion. "Shall we explore a little?"

"If you're set on it."

They set out to explore. It was apparent that Dunmalaogh airfield had once been a golf course, for the outlines of greens and bunkers could be seen here and there in the long grass. Two runways forming an X had been created by the simple process of mowing and widening the fairways of the seventh and fifteenth holes.

On the eighteenth green, not fifty yards from the clubhouse, a single hangar had been erected, an old, tired edifice whose corrugated iron roof looked as if it had been attacked by giant moths with an iron deficiency, and whose whole structure leaned a little sideways as if it were seeking a place to lie down.

Patrick's frown was deeper. "You couldn't say it was up to date, could you?" he asked doubtfully. But Marion was bewitched. "It's very romantic," she said. Patrick left it at that, being a wise man.

In the open doors of the hangar, sitting on the running-board of a sway-backed sports car with its innards removed, they encountered a man wearing fitter's overalls and a cloth cap back to front.

"Good day to you," Patrick said. "Could you tell us where we might find Squadron-Leader Maguire?"

"Good day," replied the man with the cap in a melancholy fashion. He then lifted his sad eyes to heaven, and for a moment Patrick thought that this must be a gesture of baffled resignation. But evidently it was not, for a moment later he, too, looked up and saw high above them the outline of a small single-engined biplane.

As he watched, something fell from the aeroplane and came to earth about three hundred yards away. Patrick's blue eyes widened in horror. "The Lord help us," he said. "Is it falling to pieces in the air, or am I seeing things?"

"Be easy," said the man in the cloth cap. "'Tis only one of the Captain's tricks. Every time he has a learner ready to go solo, doesn't he take his joystick and drop it overboard? 'Tis a cod, see; for if they don't fly her down after that they're in terrible trouble."

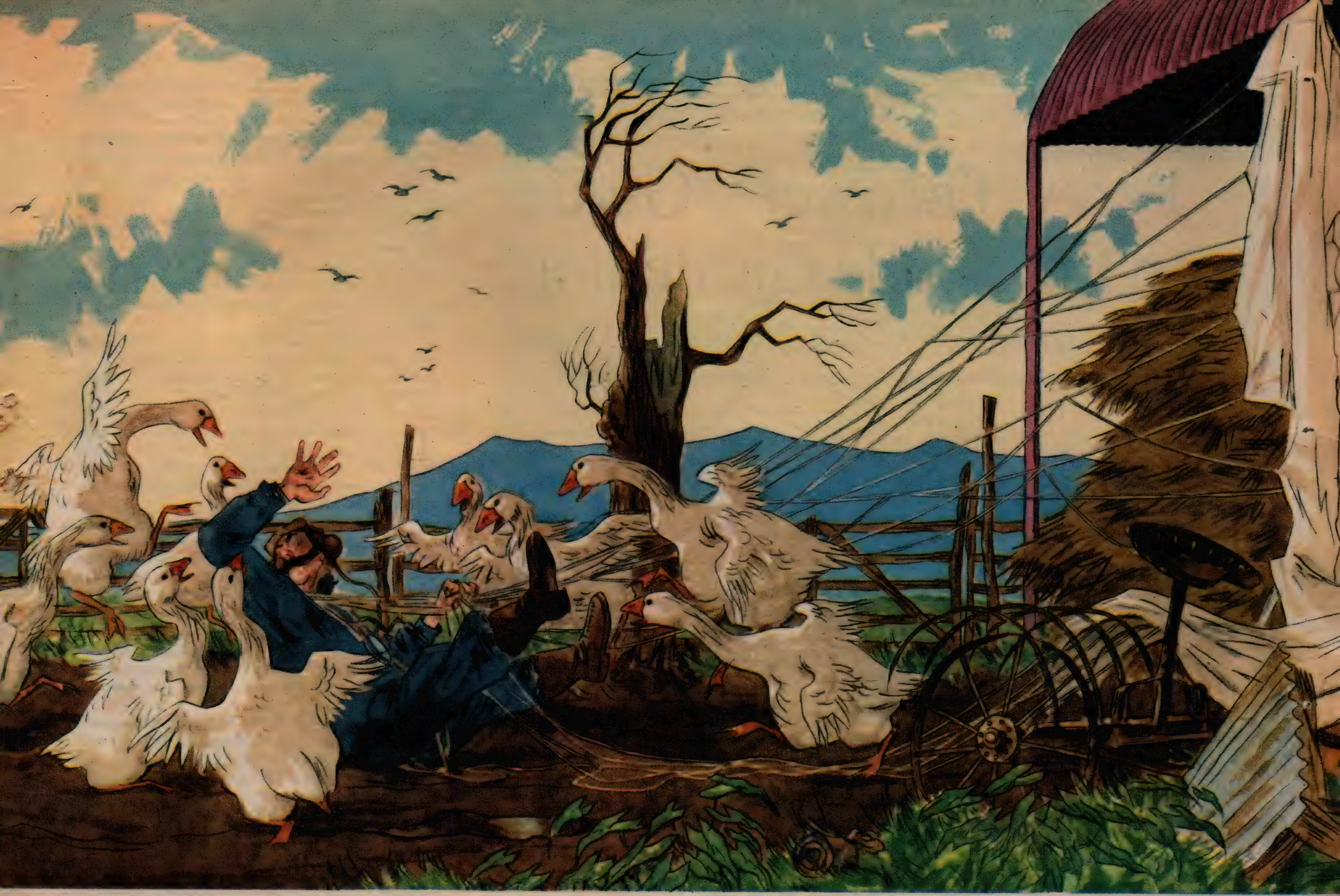
Patrick had Marion by the arm. "Darling," he said. "Sweetheart dear, had we better not go home?"

"Why, Patrick?"

"Because . . . because this is a flying club for lunatics, that is why!"

She shook her bright, dark head at him. "For shame, Pat," she said. "Just because it's small, and a bit shabby, and they haven't everything chromium-plated as they would have in Dublin,

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE



But it was Terence Maguire—blaspheming terribly as he tried to disentangle himself before the geese ate him whole

is that a reason for leaving before we've even had a proper look round?"

"Yes," said Patrick.

"Well, I don't think so," Marion said solemnly. "I think it would be nice to give poor Squadron-Leader Maguire a helping hand, if he's down on his luck—him a hero that was with the British against the Nazis and all." She turned towards the man with the cap. "Will the Squadron-Leader be long now, Mister—er. . . ?"

"Name of Clancy," the man with the cap said. "He'll be here in no time. Will you not wait in the bar?"

"Thank you," said Marion.

Mr. Clancy had risen. "I'll just lay me hands on that joystick," he said. "Cost a pound apiece they do, and the Captain hates to lose them . . . mind the wire as you go; 'tis to keep the sheep from the whiskey."

Ten minutes later a big man carrying goggles and a leather flying helmet walked into the clubhouse. He had wiry black hair, cut short and standing up for itself. He also had a fine moustache whose upturned extremities would have been easily visible to someone standing behind him. His pale blue eyes held an expression of good nature, bravado and self-satisfaction. "Good day all," he said.

"This is the Captain," said Clancy.

"My name is Patrick Tennessy," Patrick said courteously, with a strong feeling that he was not going to like Squadron-Leader Maguire at all. "And this is my fiancée, Miss Marion Donovon."

"How do you do?" said the big man in a loud voice. He turned away. "Clancy! Will you go and see the aircraft before you get in the rats?"

Clancy drained a glass in silence and left.

"Would you be wanting to learn to fly?" Squadron-Leader Maguire inquired.

"Not I," Patrick said quickly. "Miss Donovon was wondering. . . ."

"Of course I want to learn to fly," Marion interrupted. "Take no notice of Patrick Tennessy, Squadron-Leader Maguire. He's a poet and nervous about such things. How much would the lessons cost?"

Terence Maguire walked the length of the bar counter, filling a glass for himself on the way. He then leaned forwards to have a good look at Marion, taking his time. Finally he smiled.

"Aren't you the bright, teachable young lady, now?" he said and the stretch of teeth beneath the black moustache was like a row of newly whitewashed tombstones. Patrick Tennessy's eyes narrowed.

"Shouldn't take a girl like you more than four or five hours to solo," Maguire was saying in a voice thick with blarney, "and that'll not cost you more than fifteen pounds."

Marion was enchanted. "That'll be quite all right," she said. It happened that her father was a Ballsbridge auctioneer and a man of great substance. "When can I have my first lesson?"

"There's no time like the present," Maguire answered.

At that moment a small, fair, middle-aged gentleman walked into the clubhouse. He, too, was carrying goggles and a flying helmet. Maguire went to the whiskey bottle and put three measures into a glass before setting it in front of the newcomer. "This is Colonel Dundreary," he said. "He's just been solo for the first time in his life and very well he did it, but it does take it out of a man."

Patrick said in a loud, firm voice: "What about this business of throwing out the joystick when your pupils are about to go solo? Is that not a very dangerous thing to do?"

Maguire laughed loudly. "So you saw that, did you? Be easy, laddie. I wouldn't do it if I were not sure of getting down in one piece, believe me. It encourages 'em to take the plunge, you see. Doesn't it, Colonel?"

"Yes," said Colonel Dundreary. "Can I have another whiskey. . . ?"

The Dunmalaogh Flying School and Club's fleet, as it were, consisted of two de Havilland Gipsy Moth biplanes with a third in a bedraggled condition because it had been cannibalized for spares. One of the Moths was now parked on the patch of oil-stained tar macadam outside the hangar, with the lower end of Clancy protruding from the after cockpit where he was refitting the joystick. Marion had borrowed Colonel Dundreary's flying helmet and was contriving to look bewitching in it—rather in the fashion that any girl worth her salt can manage to destroy a man while wearing pyjamas five sizes too big for her.

Patrick had taken Clancy's seat on the running-board of the sway-backed sports car and was staring at the ground between his feet.

Maguire came swaggering across from the clubhouse. "Are you ready, dear heart?"

"I am," said Marion happily. Patrick closed his eyes.

"I'll give you a hand into the cockpit . . . ah, it's as light as a feather you are. The old crate'll

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THESE MEN ARE DANGEROUS

(see page 42)

---

be a bit tail-heavy with a little bit of a thing like you forrard and Two-Ton Terence Maguire in the back, but no matter."

Once she was in the cockpit, Marion turned to wave to Patrick. He lifted a hand limply and smiled, dragging the smile up from somewhere in the region of his boots.

Maguire looked him up and down. "Is it a poet, you said?" he asked Marion.

"It is," she answered lovingly. "A very good one. He'll tweak the heart in you with his beautiful words."

"Hm," said Terence Maguire. "Now look it, dear heart. This is the joystick. That beyond is the rudder-bar. The bit of a lever over there is the throttle. Pay no attention to the instruments for most of them don't work. Put your little hand on the joystick, will you? Now, when you pull it back. . . ."

The plane took off, leaving Patrick sadly earthbound. He got up and wandered into the bar.

"Have a drink," said Colonel Dundreary.

"I could manage one," Patrick admitted. "Do you enjoy flying with Maguire?"

"It puts the heart crossways in me every time I leave the ground," the colonel answered. "If it were not that I'm after an airline job and they demanding a pilot's licence, I'd not be here now."

"She's a sweet soul," Patrick said grimly, "but there's no arguing with her once she's set upon something."

Colonel Dundreary agreed and nodded sagely, man-to-man, filled with experience and compassion. "Are they not all the same, bless their hearts?" Then he added, kindly: "I doubt she's in great danger, for Maguire's a good pilot. . . . Not in the air, that is, but she'd bear watching on the ground, because he's a terrible man for chasing the girls."

"Have I not eyes in my head?" Patrick asked sourly. "Have another whiskey."

That first day, when the Moth landed, Marion hurried in to Patrick in the bar.

"The dear man says I'm one of the most promising pupils he ever had," she reported happily. "It's so thrilling, Pat darling, up in the air like that—just like being a bird. You should try it, for I'm sure it would make you feel very poetical. . . ."

On the second day, Marion said: "Do you know that Terry shot down twenty-four German aeroplanes? He has so many medals there's hardly room for them on his fine, broad chest. And to think you were at school in Dublin the while, missing it all. What a pity! I think it's a great thing for a man to have lived dangerously, don't you agree, my darling . . . ?"

And on the third day, Marion said dreamily: "Will you not write me a poem about flying, Pat dearest? One of those long, exciting ones like Lord Byron used to write, only about flying over the enemy coast and destroying whole towns and railway trains with your terrible rockets . . . ?"

"Terry has asked me home to lunch," Marion said on the fourth day, "so I'll not be wanting a lift today, darling. We're to look at a collection of flying pictures he has in his apartment. Won't that be the greatest fun?"

That afternoon, after long thought, knowing what he had to do as if it were one of the great truths, Patrick waited at the airfield for Maguire to return from lunch. He had to wait a long time, but the man came eventually, making a noise like a banshee with the supercharger on his sports car.

"Hallo, laddie," said Maguire.

"Hallo to you," said Patrick. "I have decided I'd like to learn to fly. When can I start having lessons?"

"Glory be!" said Terence Maguire, without manners. "So the poet has a fancy to be a birdman, has he? Well, so he shall be. Come out now, and I'll give you a flip."

THUS Patrick took to the air and found that flying was not so bad as he had imagined it would be. To be sure there was that sad, sick moment near the fifteenth hole before the wheels lifted, when the Moth wallowed over the turf like a duck in a hurry. But the wheels did lift, and once you were up there was exhilaration to be had in the open cockpit with the sky above and Ireland's green below.

Again, there was the bad moment when you were coming down and the earth came rushing up towards you, dancing like a lunatic. But it was soon over and he quickly found a fascination in learning to put the old machine down as gently as if he were kissing the roses in Marion's cheeks.

Patrick did well, much to Terence Maguire's raucous surprise, and it turned out that he and Marion were judged ready to fly solo on the same day. Patrick with five hours to his credit and Marion with seven.

Marion was to be first, and at eleven o'clock on a fine, sunny Thursday she took off, with Patrick, Colonel Dundreary and Clancy for an audience. They watched while the Moth climbed hand-over-hand to a thousand feet, did a couple of rolls, climbed another thousand feet and looped twice. Then, sure enough, a black speck dropped from the after cockpit.

"There's the stick," Clancy said, pointing like a hunting dog. "Poor creature, she'll be feeling terribly lonely this minute."

Patrick said rudely: "Shut your trap, Clancy," and held his breath. He need not have bothered, for Marion circled the airfield thrice and brought the Moth in for a bumpy, but by no means disgraceful landing.

Twenty minutes later, downing his Paddy's Three Swallows at a gulp, Maguire said: "Now it's your turn, me bucko. Feeling windy?"

Patrick looked him straight in the eye. "Shall we get it over with?" he said, and walked out of the bar with his shoulders back. . . .

"Stall her," Maguire said over the intercom at fifteen hundred feet. Patrick obeyed. Back came the stick, up went the old plane's nose and the engine grunted like an old man trying to win a glass of stout by making a fool of himself. Patrick eased her out of the spin that developed from the stall and in his earphones the detested voice said "You'll do, me bucko—for a flying poet, that is."

Then, after a short pause, Patrick felt a tap on his shoulder. Excitement rose in him. This was the moment. He turned. Behind him, Maguire was waving the stick that he had unscrewed from its socket in the instructor's cockpit. The big man was grinning, his great teeth dazzling in the sunlight, and Patrick felt a wave of loathing sweep over him. He kept it from his face.

"You're on your own," Maguire bellowed and, with that, flicked the stick blithely over his shoulder. It fell, making a quaint whistling noise, and on the ground Clancy went after it like a well-trained retriever.

Patrick waited for a moment, smiling to himself

Continued on page 40

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Highbrow with a knock-out punch

by JOHN SANDILANDS

In the ring Peter Waterman is a fighting fury who aims at quick decisions. Then he relaxes by reading the classics—or even painting in oils

Aggression and strong punching have won most of Waterman's professional fights inside the distance. Against Bruno Marostegan, of Belgium, the referee stopped the contest in round six

Boxer Bobby Neill, a friend of Waterman, is made up for a TV appearance. Waterman has a contract as a television broadcaster

At the second interval of a performance of the Bolshoi Ballet at Covent Garden one evening last autumn, a slim, dark-haired young man in a well-cut suit excused himself courteously to the rest of his party and left his seat in the stalls.

Peter Waterman, the British welterweight boxing champion, had had a tiring day. That afternoon, in a gymnasium above a public house in the Old Kent Road, he had floored three sparring partners in as many rounds as part of his preparation for an approaching fight. Now he was going home to bed.

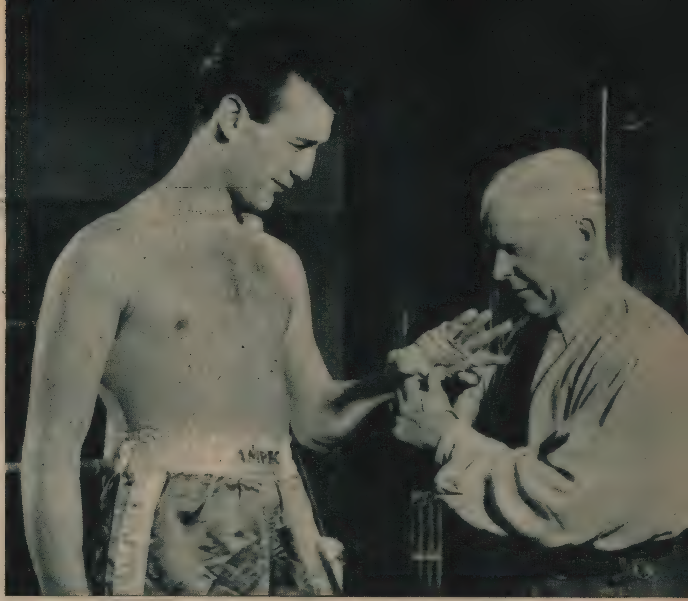
"Peter persuaded a friend to queue all night for the Bolshoi tickets," says Peter Jones, the business man with whom Waterman shares a contemporarily furnished London flat, "but, keen as he was to see the ballet, he wouldn't break training by staying up late."

Waterman, at twenty-two, has cultural interests which extend to classical music, literature and art. But these are in no way allowed to conflict with a devotion to destruction in the ring that has marked him as one of the toughest fighters in postwar boxing and as a possible future contender for a world title.

The ferocity of his fighting style has surprised many experts, and the record of his three-year professional career shows thirty-four wins—twenty-eight inside the distance—out of thirty-six fights. His only defeat was a loss on points in a return contest with the former world champion, Kid Gavilan, an acknowledged ring-genius.

Waterman is pale featured and intense with a small, hard jaw and deep-set blue eyes. He has a subdued but expensive taste in tailoring, a studied manner, and is articulate to a degree that has gained him a two-year contract with

At a television studio Waterman chats with two girl assistants. To improve his voice he has elocution lessons. "But he would sooner drop an aitch than a fight decision," says a friend



Snowy Buckingham, Waterman's trainer, has had forty years' boxing experience. But he is often puzzled by Waterman's composure before a big fight. In his South London flat Waterman likes to read or listen to music

commercial television as a sports broadcaster.

The polish he has acquired for this job finds no reflection in his ring performances. Shortly before he left his corner against the former European champion, Idrissa Dione, at Streatham Ice Rink last November, he gave a smooth-talking performance in an interview for television cameras which were paying their first visit to a boxer's dressing-room before a fight.

"Watching him slugging Dione angrily round the ring it was almost impossible to recognize the cool young man of the previous few minutes," says Ken Johnstone, who handled the interview.

Five feet ten and a half inches tall with a fighting weight of only ten and a half stone, Waterman has a willowy physique and slender arms that give no indication of his powerful punching or the stamina which keeps him thrusting forward constantly throughout a fight.

Invariably after a bout Waterman takes several hours to "wind down," then sleeps heavily on the following day. His manager, Jarvis Astaire, no longer troubles to book him sleeping berths or hotel rooms after bouts outside London. "He is usually still talking to a crowd of his supporters at four or five the next morning," he says.

By contrast Waterman bewilders even his trainer, Snowy Buckingham, who has had forty years in the business, by his complete lack of nervous tension before a fight. "He seems to look forward to the big occasion," says Buckingham. "He gives no signs of strain and usually sleeps like a baby until it is time to get into the ring."

Waterman is not interested in watching future opponents in action, but undertakes his own preparations with keen concentration. Snowy Buckingham has only two complaints: Waterman's insistence on doing as much ring work as possible, and the rough handling he gives his sparring partners, which makes them hard to find even at more than £1 a round.

His relaxations from training leave the older school of fight followers slightly bemused. Between bouts of sparring for his title fight with Wally Thom last year he read the translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. Rallying gamely, however, his fellow professionals marked their respect for erudition by electing him as the boxers' representative on the Southern Area Council of the Boxing Board of Control.

Waterman's supporters—one promoter says he can currently command the biggest following at any weight in the country—have also rationalized his cultural activities. "Anyone who thinks Peter's an egg-head should see him in action," says one enthusiast.

During the preliminaries to a bout Waterman indulges in what his corner has come to call a "hate." His head bent over his gloves, he begins to work up the cold anger which he regards as his most efficient fighting state.

Called to the centre of the ring for the referee's instructions he nods curt assent and touches gloves with his opponent with apparent distaste. At the bell he shoots from his corner in an aggressive crouch, and moves quickly to close-quarters at which he is most damaging.

"Thereafter," says his second, Mickey Duff, "he asks no favours."

According to Peter Jones, Waterman pursues his quest for knowledge in an equally uncompromising manner. "Peter," he says, "has a positive thirst for improvement."

Waterman has a wide taste in literature, with a particular fondness for biography. Musically he is equally at home with "pop" records or classics and ballet music. He is fond of the theatre and has shown some promise as a painter in oils.

As an aid to his microphone manner he attends drama and elocution classes. "He's certainly knocking off the corners," says a television colleague, "but he leaves you in no doubt that he would sooner drop an aitch than a decision."

WATERMAN was born in Stepney, the fourth of a family of two brothers and five sisters, and had his first attempts at sparring with his elder brother, Ken, a promising welterweight from whom, he says, he initially took some beatings.

His father, Harry Waterman, a former amateur boxer who is now a railwayman at Clapham Junction, returned from the R.A.F. to find the ten-year-old Peter already equipped with a powerful left hook. After a few sparring sessions it was with no reluctance, he says today, that he acceded to his son's request to join Caius Boxing Club in Battersea.

Pale and gangling to a degree that made many amateur officials doubtful of his fitness to fight, Waterman started promisingly, but at fourteen lost four fights in a row and declared his intention of giving up if he lost again. "Fortunately," says a Caius member, "he won his next fight, but he certainly meant what he said."

Subsequently he won all but nine of his 130 bouts as an amateur, became junior and senior champion of Britain and, at seventeen and a half, was the youngest member of the British team in the Helsinki Olympics. He turned professional shortly before he began his service in the R.A.F.

Waterman still devotes a lot of time to Caius, where he teaches and encourages beginners, acts as a second in club matches and is always available for sparring practice.

He is tolerant with younger fighters, but a well-known amateur light-heavyweight who asked for his help in tuning up for the last Olympic Games discovered the dangers of rousing his fighting temper. After taking the heavier man's punches for nearly a round, Waterman opened up and twice knocked him down.

A year ago Waterman formed himself into a limited company, and gave up all but his television work to concentrate on boxing. Latterly his box office appeal has brought him purses as high as £3,000 a fight, but he has few extravagances outside expensive suits and accessories.

He shares a small car with Peter Jones, who was secretary of Caius when he first invited Waterman to share his flat at West Norwood four years ago. Jones, who is now his mentor and business guide, has found that an increasing bank balance and an improving social status has done little to lessen Waterman's primitive attitude towards his activities in the ring.

Civilizing influences, however, were at work on the night some time ago when Waterman and two non-combatant friends were surrounded by a gang of Teddy Boys armed with bottles as they were crossing Clapham Common.

Instead of taking action Waterman stood his ground and lectured his assailants. He argued so effectively that the gang went away. THE END

Women on the warpath

by PETER JACKSON

With rousing protests and fighting spirit, Lady Dyer's half-million women are winning a "happier countryside." And they let nobody frighten them

There's fun and games as well as serious business at women's institutes. At Hayes, Kent, the meeting ends with folk dancing

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

On a cold, rainy morning four years ago, Lady Dyer, a member of Diddlebury Women's Institute, left her car in the garage and walked three miles along hilly Shropshire lanes to catch a local bus. A crowd of housewives was already sheltering at the bus stop—an old oak tree with overhanging boughs. Lady Dyer took her place in an eager queue, felt the excitement behind the usual gossip, and joined in the cheer which went up when the bus eventually arrived.

"It might have been an annual outing to the sea," says Lady Dyer. "Actually, it was only a journey to Ludlow, but it was still a big event in our lives. For this was the first trip of the first service bus Diddlebury had ever had—and the housewives on board really felt it belonged to them."

For more than two years the women's institute had campaigned for some public transport to and from their isolated village. By resolutions, petitions, letters, telephone calls and market-day deputations they had pestered the bus company at Ludlow. At last they had been rewarded with a once-weekly service. And to make sure that it got off to a good start, many institute members were going to town just for the ride, while Lady Dyer went shopping by bus instead of car.

"Our achievement at Diddlebury might seem trivial," says Lady Dyer, now chairman of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, "but if all of our eight thousand institutes had similar successes it would mean a vast expansion of public transport in rural areas. We have often shown that trivialities on a nationwide scale can add up to a big issue."

London journalists covering the annual meeting of the National Federation at the Albert Hall in 1952 were amused when Lady Dyer supported a resolution urging the removal of the purchase tax on wireless batteries. "Surely they went out with crystal sets," one Fleet Street reporter protested to the women's press officer. But a show of hands revealed that more than half of the five thousand delegates depended on battery radio, and indicated that thousands of country dwellers were being taxed for having no mains electricity. An official protest was sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The tax was removed at the next Budget.

A few months ago, a young East Anglian housewife told Lady Dyer that her family had to live on tins of dried milk although their home was in rich dairy country. No longer allowed to sell milk direct from the cow, local farmers were sending all their milk for processing at the nearest market town, twelve miles away, and retailers there considered it unprofitable to deliver to isolated rural customers. Finding that there is a similar distribution difficulty in many areas, Lady Dyer is now pressing the matter with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. "We cannot have country children growing up wondering what a cow is for," she says.

Tall and slim, a housewife and a mother, fifty-one year old Lady Dyer makes her call for action as leader of 500,000 women, who make up the largest organization of its kind in the world. Women's institutes are pledged to work for a "happier countryside." Over the past forty years they have brought telephone kiosks to the loneliest communities, supported the introduction of women police, exposed the ill-treatment of animals, and fought for cheap milk.

Women's institutes bring an intensive approach to any problem they tackle, and manufacturers have come to respect the views of institute members.

Government departments were presented with a modern Domesday Book when institutes completed an intimate survey of six thousand villages early last year. The findings showed that many rural communities are still without proper sewerage, street lighting, piped water, and village halls. Asked to state who emptied the dustbins, one institute reported: "Wind and children, mainly." A Welsh village urged two measures to control traffic through its only street —"a zebra crossing to stop the cars, and iron railings to keep out the cows."

When a need has been revealed, institutes are prepared to do something about it themselves. Until a few years ago, Diddlebury had no proper village hall. The institute, which had been meeting in an old barn, led a drive to build the modern assembly hall which they now use along with other local organizations. Lady Dyer and her fellow members played whist to raise funds and then carried bricks and mortar as their menfolk started work on the site.

"It was a real community effort," she recalls. "One rather stout old pensioner insisted on joining in, wheeling sand in his grandson's toy barrow."

After the hall had been built, Lady Dyer went into a Ludlow shop to buy electric fires for the committee rooms. When shown a range of heaters, she pointed out that they were not fitted with regulation guards. The proprietor began some smooth sales talk, aimed at showing how unnecessary the new guards were, but then stopped suddenly in the middle of a sentence. Producing some regulation fires, he confessed: "I've been trying to get rid of the others for some weeks. But I see from the badge in your lapel that you're another of these women watchdogs. I've given up trying to fool you lot."

"Belonging to a women's institute involves far more than sipping tea and playing games in the village hall once a month," says Lady Dyer. As "Prime Minister of the Countrywomen's Parliament," she receives an annual allowance of £100 and travelling expenses for a job which follows the pattern and pace of an election campaign without end. In between visits to London to preside over top-level policy discussions, to address mass meetings, or to face television cameras, she covers thousands of miles on institute business at home and abroad.

Last November, Lady Dyer was preparing to fly to Ceylon for an international conference of the Associated Countrywomen of the World. There she would have spoken for Britain on topics ranging from nuclear tests and "X" certificate films to the best tune for a universal "Song of Peace." But the Suez crisis stopped the conference. Instead she drove to her local institute at Diddlebury. As an ordinary member sitting in the back row, she joined in a discussion on a proper bus shelter to replace that

In her home near Diddlebury, Lady Dyer chats with members of the local institute. She has helped them to obtain many amenities for the village

Diddlebury's village duck pond was cleaned after complaints by the institute that it was choked with refuse and tin cans

overhanging oak—and sang carols as she helped with the washing-up.

"Basically, women have the same interests whether they meet in a parish hall or around a conference table, whether their home is a cottage or a bamboo hut," she says. When the women's institute movement was extended to Malaya in 1952, the Malay women were attracted by all the activities of English institutes—particularly knitting. Despite the tropical heat, they preferred double-ply wool to make the thickest socks, dresses, and balaclava helmets.

Lady Dyer believes that the well-disciplined institute meetings have paved the way for women's entry into local government—although she once attended a meeting where members debated so enthusiastically that the president threw away her gavel and clashed two saucepan lids together to keep order. Thirty years of institute procedure have overcome Lady Dyer's own natural reserve and she has developed a business manner to go with her tweeds, brogues, and close-cropped hair.

Institute training has given the Warwickshire village of Bishops Itchington a "Petticoat Council" since 1949, when women's institute candidates won six of the seven seats on the parish council, and Mrs. Edith Chapple-Hyam combined the posts of council chairman and institute president. Men serving on neighbouring councils openly doubted the women councillors' efficiency, but began secretly to acquire institute booklets on procedure as Bishops Itchington was provided with new footpaths, more houses, a £70,000 sewerage scheme, and better street lighting.

Institutes have always been undenominational and non-party. At the Anglesey village of Llanfair P.G., where the first meeting was held in 1915, it was shown that the movement could close even the gap between the Welsh church and chapel factions. Rivalry in a mining district brought Lady Dyer into institute work when she was living in Northumberland in 1926.

"In a village split between colliers and bosses, I was rated neutral and made president," she says. "Even so we were regarded with open suspicion, and trade union officials attended our first meeting to see what this 'secret society' was up to. They were reassured when they saw we were pressing for nothing more sinister than a resident district nurse."

Development of the movement has matched the emancipation of women. In the early days, even the programme was sometimes considered startling. Women attending the inaugural meeting at Diddlebury in 1923 were shocked when a demonstrator proceeded to skin a rabbit—*in public*. Now, women's institutes take an active interest in child psychology, study economic geography, and listen to talks on flaky pastry, fascinating fungi, elephant hunting and chick rearing. At the National Federation's Denman College, members are instructed in art, elocution, dancing, handicrafts and make-up.

Public stage performances of Shakespeare, opera and musical comedy are put on in village halls as well as at the county festivals. "Some of our leading ladies do tend to get a little temperamental when they have to squeeze rehearsals between washing-up after tea and preparing supper," says Lady Dyer. "But our dancing girls are always safe from back stage 'wolves,' who can't get near the door for prams." Lady Dyer once shocked a theatrical costumier by asking for chorus girl dresses with an average waist measurement of thirty-eight inches. "By the time we have given the principal rôles to the members with reasonable figures, the chorus is inevitably a bit hefty," she explained. Elected national chairman last June, Lady Dyer remains a back-row member of her local institute because "the test of what we decide at London is whether it can be understood in the villages."

As the countrywomen's organization, the institute is restricted to villages and small towns, and each of the two hundred new institutes formed every year requires official permission to join the movement. A request from a group of women living in five houses on a mountainside near the Scottish border was received recently by Lady Dyer's staff. They replied that the population was too small to support an effective institute, and suggested joining one at a neighbouring village. But the letter was held up when a snowstorm cut off the houses for three weeks. The first person to get out was a woman, who posted another letter to London.

"We had to give way to their determination when we read the message," says Lady Dyer. The letter said: "We have had nothing to do for three weeks, so went ahead and formed an institute. We have already raised £10 for the funds. What do we do with it?" THE END

The women usually begin institute meetings with the hymn "Jerusalem." Every year two hundred new institutes are formed. One of them is in a hamlet with only five houses

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The white wind

Continued from page 11

and studious, with immaculate white shirt and shorts and white stockings.

The boy ran towards these men with excitement, waving both hands in greeting. "Dr. Gregory! Monsieu' Longuemart! Dr. Gregory!"

Dr. Gregory, the rubbery, spectacled American, waved a hand in reply. The Frenchman merely smiled at the sight of the boy stumbling down towards the airstrip, and it was Gregory who called: "Hi, Timi! How are you? What goes?"

He held out a cool, greyish hand to grip the boy's dusty palm, and the boy in turn held out his other hand to grasp the bag.

"I may carry the bag?"

"One of these days the bag will carry you."

"Please?"

"Never mind. Skip it," the doctor said. "Have you been a good boy? That's the thing. Did you take your pills?"

"Yes, Doctor."

"All of them? How many left?"

"Four. I'd forgotten it was today you came."

"Good boy."

The boy walked the rest of the way to the waterfront between the Frenchman and the American. The Frenchman was speechless, reserved and smiling. It was always the American who talked.

"Did Ginette take her pills?"

"I think so."

"Anybody else you know take them? What about Fat Uncle?"

"He was going to take them one night and then he went fishing. Another day he was sick."

"Where? How sick?"

"Here."

The boy put his hand on his stomach. The doctor said: "They are always sick, aren't they?" and the Frenchman, to whom the remark was really addressed, smiled more broadly.

"Have you been sick?"

"No, Doctor."

They were by now on the waterfront, in sight of the short cluster of houses, the schooner and the hotel.

"I see Pierre's boat isn't here," the doctor said. "Where's Pierre?"

"I think he has taken the boat to Apia," the boy said. "He went yesterday."

As they walked the rest of the distance down the waterfront, the doctor felt a sudden compulsion to muse aloud to the Frenchman.

"One of these days they'll be in a fine jam here," he said. "Pierre will have the boat in Apia or Suva or somewhere and we won't have the plane fixed and something'll break out and there'll be a fine mess. Like the epidemic on Bora-Bora. There'll be hell to pay."

He waved seemingly tired, loose-jointed hands at house fences on which trailed creepers of tender golden bells. His grey eyes rested on bright barriers of red gingerlily and hibiscus, the hibiscus full blown, crimson and yellow, still unshrivelled by glaring sun.

"Beautiful, isn't it?" the doctor said. "Incredibly beautiful. I must get some pictures before I go back. I've got a batch of new slides. Look at the crotons. They always remind me of snakes, those yellow ones. They come out well in colour."

They presently drew level with Edison's schooner, the semi-derelict henhouse rocking gently up and down against the wooden waterfront piles, and the doctor stopped to regard her with a certain ironic sadness.

"All so beautiful, Jean, but no telephone." Gazing from the schooner, he turned with shrugged shoulders to the Frenchman. "How do you like your lines of communication?"

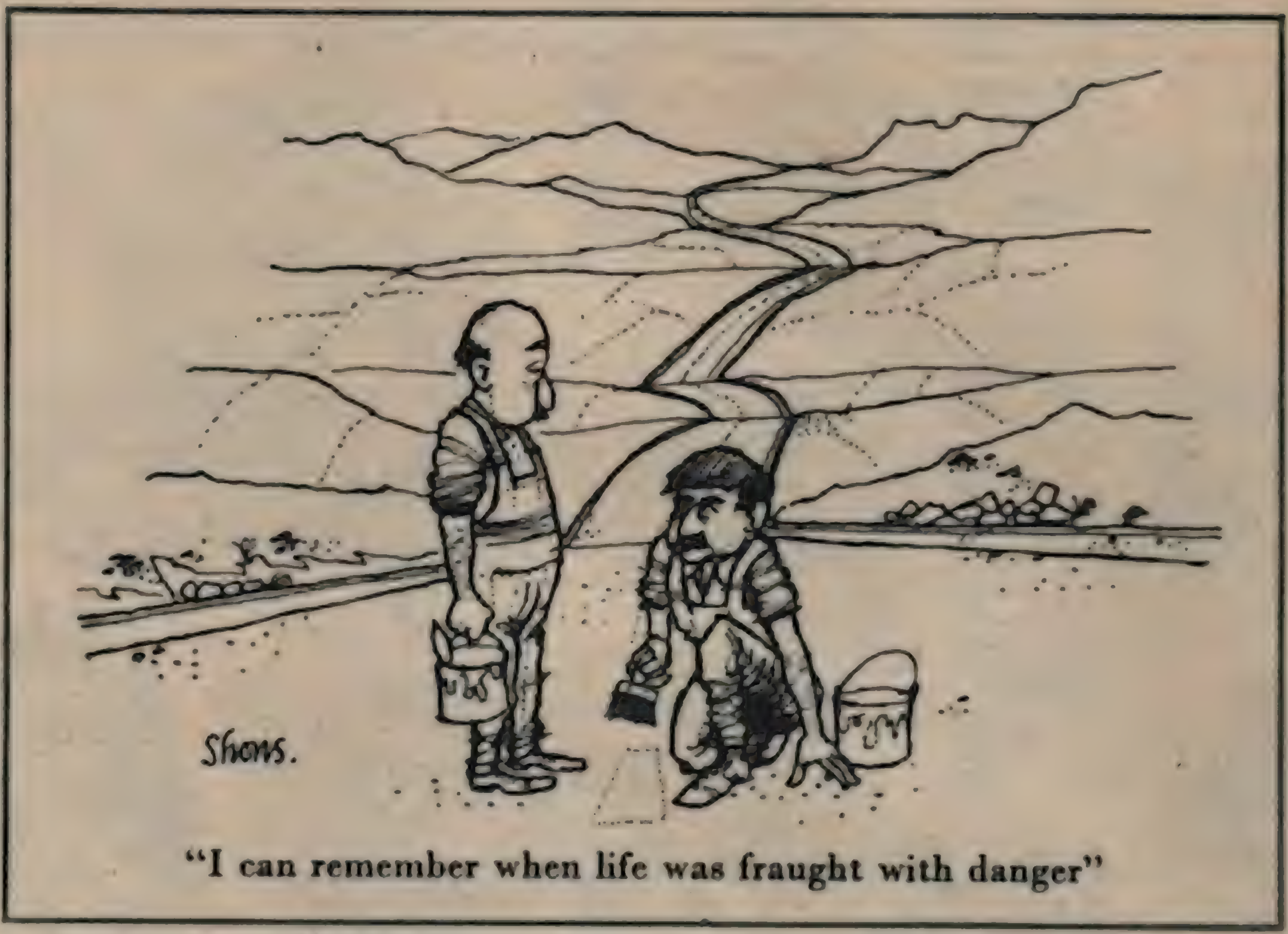
The Frenchman, staring at the schooner, smiled, too, and also ironically.

"She goes like the wind," the boy said.

"Does she now? Who says so?"

"Fat Uncle. Faster than the wind. She goes faster than the wind."

"Does she?" the doctor said. He strode along, too affected to look at the boy, feeling it time to move on. He rested a hand on the boy's shoulder, as if in comfort or tenderness, or merely confidentially. "So you haven't been sick? Nothing? Not once?"



"I can remember when life was fraught with danger"

"No, Doctor."

"And you know why you haven't been sick?"

"Yes, Doctor."

"Why?"

"Because I take the pills."

"Good boy," the doctor said.

They were already within fifty yards of the hotel. Abruptly the doctor stopped again, eyes protuberant with moderately pained disgust as he stared at Edison's crumbling frontage.

"How do you suppose it holds up?" he said. "The only good thing about it is the soda water. Every time I come here I expect to see it flat. Which way do you suppose it would fall, Jean? On its face or on its backside?"

The Frenchman spoke with meticulous, pointed effect for the first time. "On its knees, I hope."

"Yes? I suppose a short prayer would do it no harm," the doctor said.

PARENTS—1

The fundamental defect of fathers is that they want their children to be a credit to them.

Bertrand Russell

The first of these ironic flippancies was lost on the boy. He understood the doctor only when he spoke of pills. In a simple illustration, months before, the doctor had made him understand, perfectly and for all time, the meaning of the pills.

"I want you to look at this. The picture of a girl. Do you think she's beautiful?" The doctor, who was fond of photography, had drawn from his case a coloured slide.

The boy held the translucent glass to the light and gazed at it. "Yes, she is beautiful. Something like Ginette," he said.

The doctor retrieved the slide and held out another. "Now look at this. Would you think, perhaps, she was the same girl?"

"No. Not the same girl."

"Why not?"

"She looks very old and she has the elephant legs."

"She is the same girl," the doctor said. "She has the elephant legs. Only ten months later."

After this the doctor took him by the hands. The doctor's loose, large-jointed fingers were surprisingly cool and tender.

"Nothing like that can happen to you if you take the pills," he said. "You understand? Nothing can ever happen to you."

They were by now outside the front of the hotel. The doctor and the Frenchman went inside and sat at one of the scarlet cubicles, followed by the boy.

"I guess a gin-fizz is called for," the doctor said. "Perhaps two gin-fizzes." White globes of sweat from the short exertion of the walk had begun to drip from his face and neck and chest, and with a large, white handkerchief he started to mop them away. "Tell Edison two gin-fizzes," he said to the boy. "Two really nice long gin-fizzes. Special ones."

"Special ones," the boy said. "Yes, Doctor," and moved away from the cubicle.

It was the girl and not Edison who eventually brought the gin-fizzes, carrying them in on a round bamboo tray.

"Ginette," the doctor said and both he and the Frenchman half rose from their seats in greeting.

"Eddo will be here in a minute. Oh! Don't get up." Her mouth, red and rather full, broke at once and for no reason at all into bright, beating laughter. "He's in a temper at me because I was late getting the fish."

"Please sit down," the doctor said. "Have a drink with us."

"Oh! No, I'm quite happy." She laughed again, too readily and too loudly, the doctor thought, with head thrown back, thick, red tongue quivering in the broad but pretty mouth.

"The boy could get it."

"Oh! No, I'm really quite happy."

She sat down. The doctor could not help admiring, as he always did, the sumptuous golden arms, the primitively sensational shoulders rising smooth and naked from the cavern of blue-black hair, as she leaned her elbows on the table and laughed splendidly again, for the third time. There was always something extraordinarily lovable, simple and touching, he thought, about that laughter. But today it struck him as being not only physically rich and splendid but also, in some way he hadn't yet fathomed, uneasily sad.

"Well, have a drink of mine," he said.

She laughed again. "Well, all right, Doctor, a drink of yours." She picked up the long glass and half looked at the doctor, then at the Frenchman, through the rim of it. "*Santé!*" She drank gin-fizz, very briefly. "How long do you stay?"

"It depends," the doctor said, "on how good people are. If they take their pills. Did you take your pills?"

"Of course."

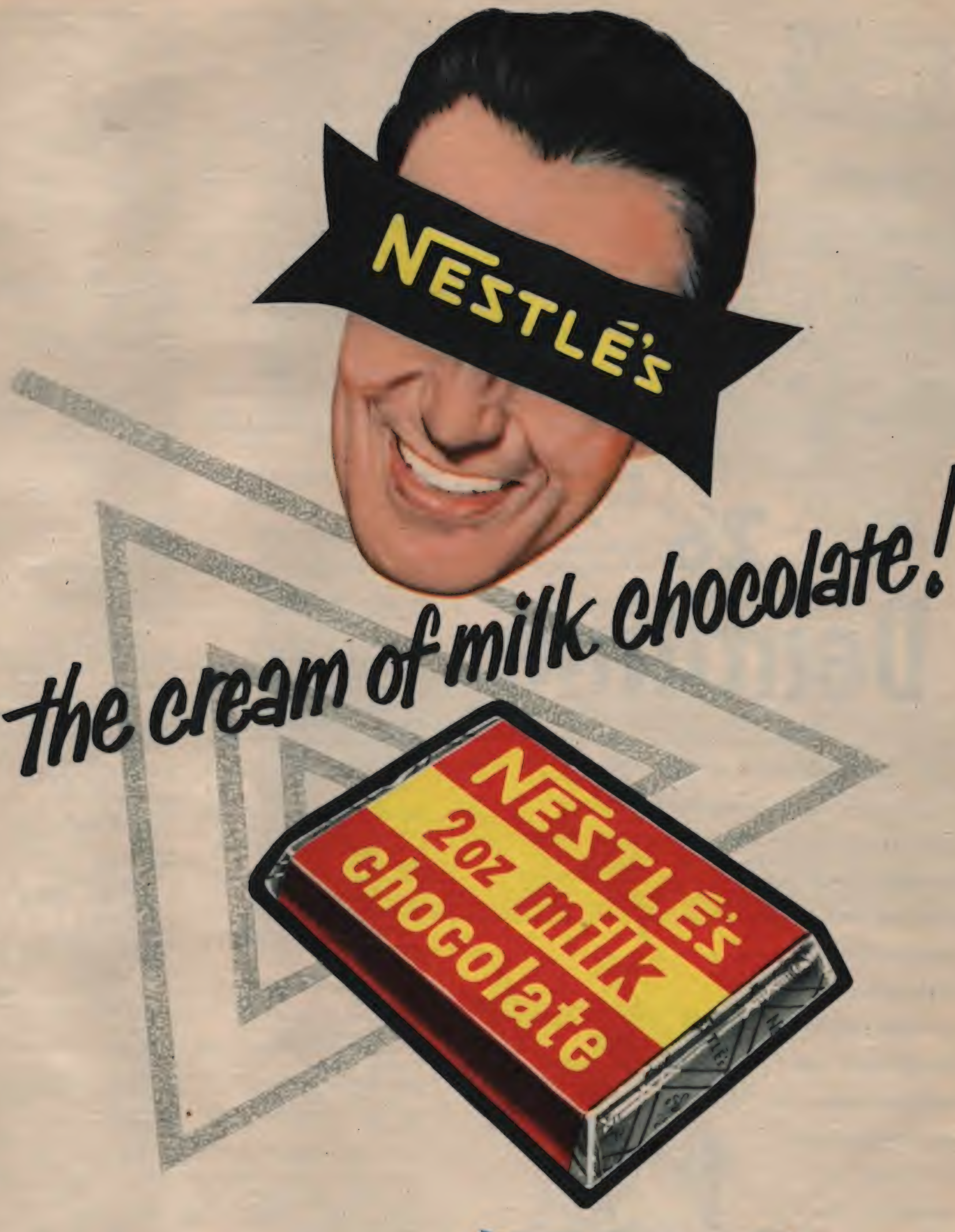
"If they were all as good as you," the doctor said, "we'd be away the same afternoon."

"Then I'm glad they're not all as good as me."

This was the signal for new and louder laughter and this time the doctor and the Frenchman joined in.

The laughter had hardly died away before Edison appeared in sloppy purple shirt, sky-blue trousers and a growth of beard that was like a pale, sandy scrubbing brush. Slouching, he shook hands loosely with the doctor and the Frenchman and then sat down, scratching his bare chest.

"Fish salad all right?" he asked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the doctor. "Raw fish? All I can do today. I know you always like it."

"Fine," the doctor said.

"Might get a sucking-pig next time you come," Edison said, "and Ginette'll get some shrimps. She'll do that favourite curry of yours."

Suddenly, Edison got up, went to the corner bar, beyond the cubicle, and poured himself a neat, deep whisky to which he added a gill of soda. Then he came back to the cubicle, bringing the bottle and drinking from the glass as he walked along. It was a favourite habit of his.

"Fit?" the doctor said. "I'll bet you didn't take those pills?"

"No," Edison said, "and you know I never will. Whites don't get elephantiasis. You know that." He held up his glass. "This is my bug-killer. Served me well and faithfully, man and boy, for many years."

The doctor looked away. He was not anxious to pursue any farther the discussion of a subject on which he was aware he was liable to grow distastefully fanatical when roused. He stared instead at Edison's schooner, moored across the waterfront.

Because it is there . . .

by A. E. DODD

When asked why anyone should want to climb Everest, Mallory replied: "Because it is there."

Because it is there, a sky-drawn peak,
We climb from valley comfort to the snow
Leaving the bright luxuriance below
To cross the ice-fall and crevasse; seek
No reason more than—"It is there."

Because it is there, we shall endeavour,
Shall reach beyond the foothill world of fact,
Sail westward through the sundown cataract,
Plumb depths, achieve the Pole, and ever
Answer—"This we do because it is there."

Because it is there, we still shall query
Distant star, the planet and its solar year,
The moon's remote unmirrored hemisphere,
And lost in stellar distance, mind weary,
We shall probe on—because it is there.

Because it is there, a tension in our soul,
A tempered spring of undimensioned Time,
A moment's thought-leap clear of space, sublime,
Man shall endure man's martyrdom, the goal
At length be won—because it is there.

"I see Pierre's away. What do you do for supplies when Pierre's not here?"

"Oh—people call. Boats. You'd be surprised."

"Something you'd like when we come next time?"

"Don't think so," Edison said. "We always manage. Nothing ever happens here."

"Supplies of bug-killer good?"

"Splendid. Never been exhausted yet."

It pained the doctor to sit through the remainder of the drinks, through lunch and through some minutes of coffee afterwards, during which Edison lowered the level of the whisky bottle by several further inches and Ginette laughed at every other sentence or so. He did not know why he now felt unusually discomforted and pained at the impression of some rift between the drinking Edison and the laughing girl, but his heart felt curiously sore and sick whenever he looked at her.

He found relief in praising the coffee. The only really tolerable thing about Edison, he thought, was the coffee. It was really quite remarkable coffee that Edison made. Perhaps in relief, he praised it over-generously.

"This is not only the best coffee in the islands. It's the best coffee in the world."

"I know it."

"It's nectar. It's perfect. You could never ask for anything better."

"And you tell *me* how to live," Edison said. "On pills."

Only a sense of irony kept anger pinned at the back of the doctor's throat. "I don't tell you how to live," he said. "I don't tell you how to die, either."

He was relieved and glad to escape to the soda-water bottling shed, where he found the boy feeding bottles into the rattling roundabout and Fat Uncle responding mechanically, three parts asleep, in the oppressive afternoon.

He shook hands with Fat Uncle and, while Longuemart got ready a notebook in which to record figures, if there were any figures to record, introduced the subject of pills.

Pain and nausea, with actual imitations of the process of vomiting, sprang sweatingly from Fat Uncle's face. The slits of eyes actually opened, dark with simple despair.

"Sick," Longuemart said. "He's been very sick, he says. For several days."

Gregory did not bother to use his own bad French, but said simply, in English: "Give him two pills. Explain to him that the boy takes the pills."

Longuemart, in French, explained this, at the same time holding out the pills. The eyes of Fat Uncle rolled open and then shut themselves tightly. The big hands groped at the air.

"He says he's sick enough already. The pills made him vomit twice as much. He cannot eat his food."

"Hurt his pride," the American doctor said. "Shame him. Ask him if he wants to be thought less courageous than the boy."

Fat Uncle held out his hands, flatly this time, in an appealing gesture of mute despair, and Longuemart took the opportunity of placing the pills in the right-hand palm. Fat Uncle recoiled as if cut, speaking quickly.

"He says it is not a question of being as courageous as the boy. He knows the boy is very courageous, but he is also younger. He says youth is everything. It never knows what it is to be tormented."

"Tell him—no, don't bother."

In despair, mildly tormented himself, the American suddenly gave up.

"We'll talk to him tomorrow before we leave," he said. "Give the boy his quota."

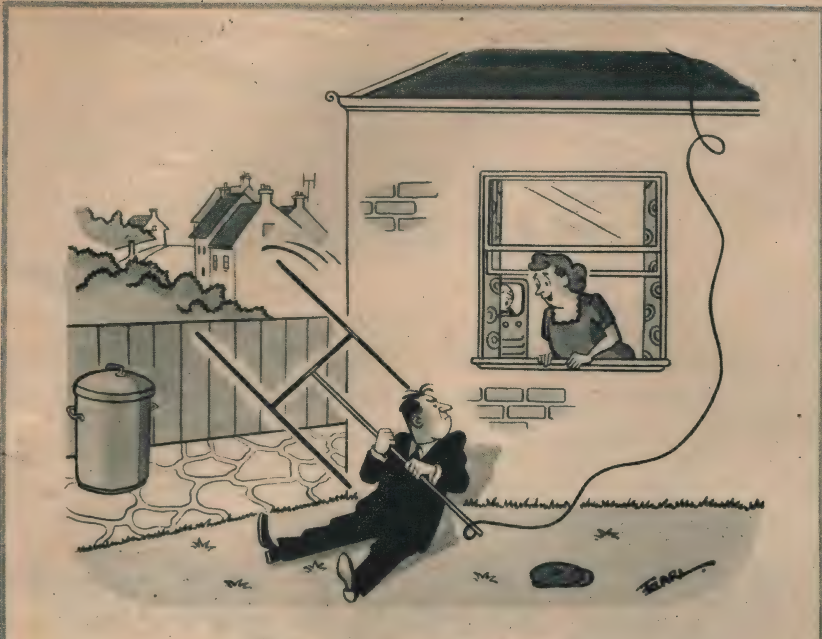
The boy, with one of his rare smiles, held up his hands for the pills. Gregory patted him on the shoulder, smiling and saying: "See you later, Timi. Ask Ginette to find me a water-melon."

Together the two doctors started walking up the slight incline at the back of the hotel, away from the waterfront. A sun like a burnished wheel flared down nakedly on that part of the road where there was no shade of palms. Its force struck the American with such unexpected brutality after the shade of the hut that he paused suddenly on the hillside to pass his hand across his face.

He was a great believer in the virtues of tabulation. He was a firm worshipper of efficiency. As a consequence he had made up his mind to record every house on the island, to give it a number and to make up a case history of every inhabitant, giving them numbers, too. It would take many weeks, but he was determined to see it through.

"Where do we start today?" he said.

"House number four. Just along



"It's much clearer now, dear"

the road. Three Chinese. Numbers thirty-seven, thirty-eight and thirty-nine-S."

The S, the American doctor was aware, stood for Suspect. He twisted loose fingers across his chin. He was suddenly oppressed by heat, by the meaningless mass of trivial details which he himself had helped to devise and which now seemed of less consequence than the occasional snaking curls of dust that a light, hot sea wind blew from the potholes.

He looked back down the hill, towards the scrubby waterfront, the hotel and the flat dust road running beside the lagoon. He could just make out the shape of the little plane on the edge of the airstrip and it was as if, for a moment, he wanted or had decided to go back to it.

"Something the matter? Did you mean to bring your camera?"

The American shook his head, seeming to sniff something. Cursorily he gave another glance at the hotel, so insubstantial-looking and tinder-like that he would not have been surprised to see it at any moment suddenly crumble or ignite in the torrid air.

"I just thought I smelled corruption," he said. "That's all. . . ."

With increasing despair, Gregory followed the Frenchman along the dust track by the lagoon at noon the following day. Both men were riding bicycles, the only form of transport, apart from horses, the island knew. The farther bay of the island was too far away for walking, and the American already felt exhausted as he tried to plough the bicycle along a track that the rainy season had left like a scoured river-bed.

All morning his mind had been alight with irritating warning signals about the perils of inefficiency. His entire training and nationality revolted against the mere notion of mess. He disliked the idea of riding a bicycle not so much for its own power to discomfort, but because his mind clamoured constantly that there must be some simpler, more efficient, less sweatily wasteful way of achieving the same end.

He got off the bicycle.

"Jean." The Frenchman, riding ahead, turned and got off his bicycle, too. "Jean—do you think you could manage here by yourself for a time?"

"I think so."

"Perhaps a week? Maybe ten days?"

"I think so. Why?"

The American raised loose, irritated hands and let them fall deprecatingly back on the handlebars of the bicycle.

"Two successes, ten failures, four pill-spitters and one who actually palmed it," he said. "We're great. We move mountains."

"The vale of prejudice."

"We've got to re-attack," the American said. "Re-form, I mean to say. If we're even going to reduce the incidence of this thing, let alone stamp it out, we'll only begin to do it by efficiency. And riding bicycles isn't efficiency."

"Nor is it a cure for filariasis."

The doctor, though fond of the Frenchman's habit of talking sense with light flippancy, did not smile. "I'm going to take the plane back," he said, "and get scooter engines fitted to the bicycles."

"You think they will prove more effective than pills?"

"I've got another idea in my mind, too," he said, "but first the bicycles." He actually turned his bicycle round in the track and stood with one foot on the pedal, preparing to get on. "It'll take a few days to work out," he said. "But if you wouldn't mind staying on here——"

"Of course. Not at all."

"Let's get back then. We'll have lunch and then load the bicycles into the plane and I'll be away."

From one of the huts which they passed as they rode back to the hotel a half-Chinese woman, seeing the two cyclists, rattled with a length of bamboo on the edge of a tin roof, attracting their attention, calling something at the same time.

PARENTS—2

The notion that parents are entitled to respect simply because they are parents is preposterous.

John Macy

"What does she say?" the American said.

The Frenchman alighted from the bicycle and stood listening.

"Something about someone being ill there."

"Did we call there already?"

"We called there yesterday. But there was no answer. We thought they were out. Fishing."

It did not seem to the American worth the bother of getting off the bicycle. The pattern was one, he thought, he knew too well.

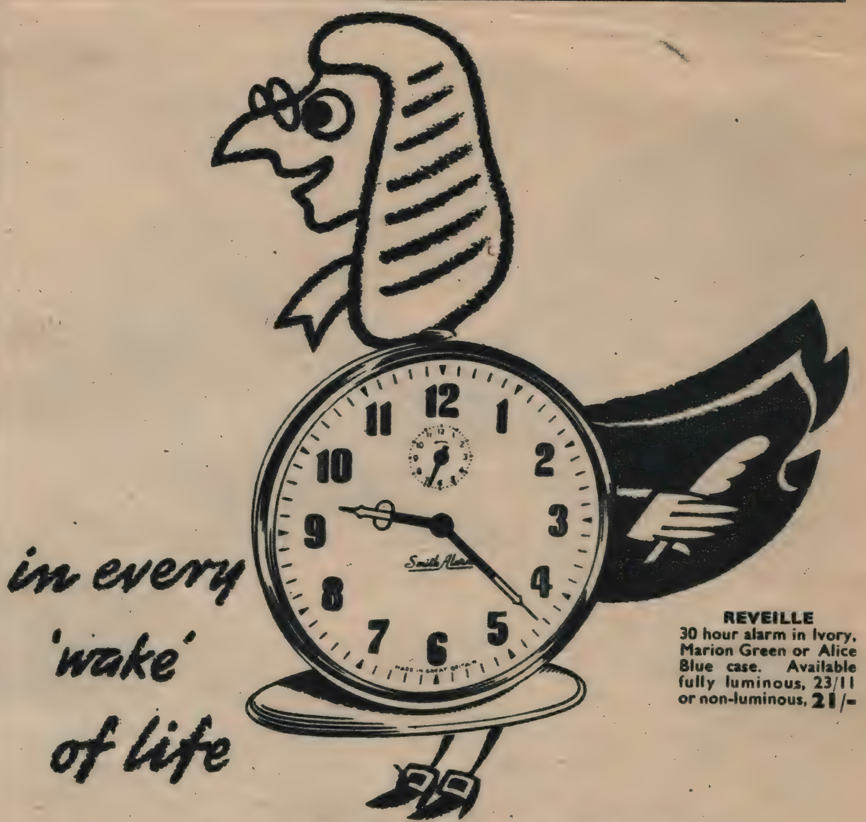
"Getting sick in readiness for us," he said. "Sickness is better than cure. We know that one."

"Ought I perhaps to go in?"

The woman again shouted something as the American bicycled on.

"Come back after lunch. It's only five minutes," he said. "Tell her you'll be back in an hour. Tell her to stay there."

At lunch the American was pleased to see the melon, a sugary-golden variety, with black, frosty seeds, that the boy had told Ginette to get for him. Edison's coffee was again quite beyond praise and the only trace of



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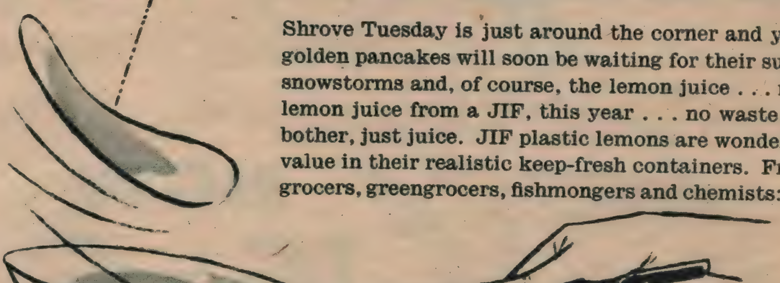

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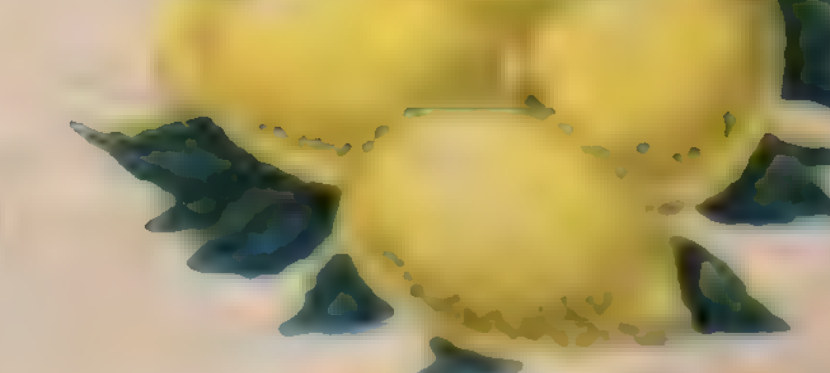

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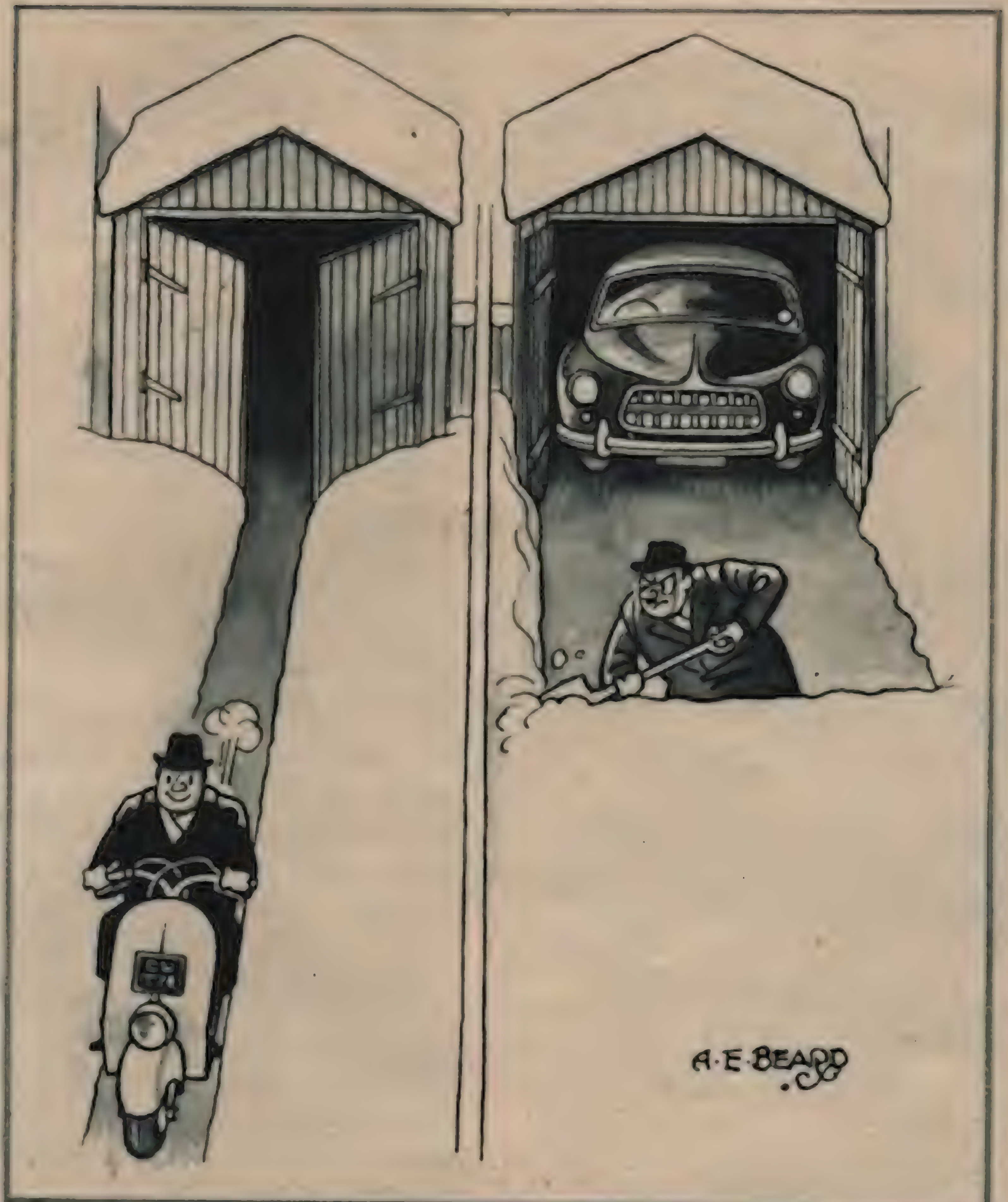

Gregory's irritations of the morning rose from the fact that the coffee was too hot to drink as quickly as he wanted.

"I'll be back in a few days," he said to Edison. "At the most a week. Was there something you wanted?"

"Hell, no," Edison said. "I keep telling you. We've got everything here."

"Including yaws, T.B., three sorts of——" The doctor started thinking and then checked himself abruptly. There was no time, even for the sake of candour, he told himself, to get himself involved in newer, further irritations. He would even decline, he thought, to take too much notice of how drunk Edison was, much drunker than at noon the previous day; or that on the face of the girl the sense of rift that had troubled him so sorely at yesterday's lunch had grown more pressing and more mystifying, a sharper pain.

"Do you wish me to ride the other bicycle to the plane with you?" Longuemart said, "or could someone else perhaps ride it? I ought to get back to that woman. I think I ought to see what's the trouble there."

"Timi can ride the bicycle," the American said. "The boy can ride it. If that's okay with Eddo?"

"Everything's okay," Edison said.

"I'll come down to the plane with you," the girl said suddenly. "I'd like to. I'll ride the bicycle."

RIDING the bicycle along the waterfront to the airstrip beyond the belt of palms, the doctor noticed that the girl hardly spoke at all. He could not help admiring, once again, as he always did, her sumptuous strength as she helped him load the bicycles into the little plane; but he was inexplicably touched, too, by the brooding rift in her face, by the emotion in the broad, quivering nose, and he said, just before preparing to climb into the cockpit: "Like to come to Papeete? Room for you if you care to come."

"No, thank you."

"Would do you good. Nice for you."

"No, thank you."

Before speaking again, the doctor performed once again his sudden trick of sniffing at air. He looked instinctively along the waterfront in the direction of the crumbling hotel and thought that, once more, as yesterday, he caught a sudden smell of corruption in the air.

"Is something the matter?" he said.

From the cavernous mass of her dark hair, turning her face away, she looked down at the dust of the airstrip, not answering.

"Is something wrong?" he said. He was moved to put his hand on her shoulder. "I know something's wrong because you laughed too much yesterday."

"He is taking another *vahine*—another girl. That's all," she said. . . .

Half an hour later she was still standing on the airstrip, gazing across the empty sky above the lagoon, as if half hoping that the aircraft would for some reason appear and come back, when Dr. Longuemart suddenly came running along the waterfront at an agitated trot.

"Has it gone? Has Gregory gone?"

The stupidity of the question, aimed at an airstrip quite empty except for herself, made him stop short, white as his own shirt with exhaustion, panting self-reproaches.

"I might have caught him if I'd had another bicycle," he said. "But I couldn't find Eddo. I might have caught him——"

She stared at him with sudden bitterness. "I could have told you where Eddo is," she said. "Why do you want the doctor? What's wrong?"

With difficulty the young Frenchman pulled his words together.

"There are three cases of typhoid in that house," he said. "And two in another. . . ."

On the floor of the shed, in the stifling heat of the afternoon, Fat Uncle slept. The machine had stopped.

The boy was dozing, too. Half dreaming, he could hear nothing but the sound of the Pacific beating against the reef. Of all the sounds in his life it was the one he heard least consciously. It simply beat through the days without rest, so that he heard it only as he might have heard the constant and ceaseless tick of a clock on a wall.

It occurred to him suddenly in this half-dream that the sea had begun to speak to him with several voices. Across the hot air these voices were arguing with complexity about something, uplifted.

He listened for several minutes, slowly waking, and then got up. It was not until he reached the door of the hut that he realized that the sea, or the envelope of hot, dead air enclosing the sea, had played on him the oddest of tricks. The voices were real voices. He could, in fact, already hear Edison's voice among them, louder than the rest, and they came from inside the hotel.

He walked across the yard. Between the yard and the cubicles that faced on to the waterfront was a kitchen where cockroaches as large as mice ran for cover when the evening lamp was lit, and where a lean and almost hairless Chinaman prepared fish and vegetables, cooked and washed-up dishes. This Chinaman, too, was asleep, his head resting on the comparatively cool edge of the sink, one yellow hand on a tap, as if in the act of turning it.

The boy remembered then that it was another of his tasks to pump water. If he forgot to work the rotary pump that pushed water up to the tank in the roof, then the Chinaman turned his taps in vain and consequently came out into the yard and beat him with a thin spearlike length of bamboo.

He was only too well aware of the significance of the hand on the tap and he slipped through the kitchen swiftly and soundlessly, bringing himself up sharply beyond the door that led into the front saloon, where the first figure he saw was that of Edison, who was waving a drumstick, and the first voice he heard was that of the young French doctor.

"I simply ask you this—is the schooner seaworthy? That's all. And you answer me neither one way nor the other."

With a gesture of expansive sarcasm, Edison waved the drumstick. "Seaworthy? Seaworthy? Of course she's seaworthy. Take a look at her before she falls in half."

Cane blinds drawn against the heat across the openings beyond the scarlet cubicles made the interior of the hotel shadowy, and it was some moments before the boy could make out the figures of both Edison and the doctor, sitting in one of the cubicles, and the face of a girl he thought at first was Ginette.

As his eyes became used to the shadows, he saw presently that it was not Ginette. The hair of the girl who sat in the cubicle was less dense and was plaited. Her body was feline, compact and rather small, and sometimes she sucked at a long glass, through a straw.

"You don't seem to be able to get it into your head that the schooner is the only means of communication we've got," the young doctor said. His voice was restless with urgency. "Can't you see that? Don't you understand?"

PARENTS—3

> Fathers and sons are much more considerate of one another than mothers and daughters.
>
> Nietzsche

"Communication?" Edison said. "God, there's bags of communication." He waved the drumstick. "Walk along the waterfront. You'll find twenty canoes. They'll take you."

"A hundred and thirty miles?" the doctor said. "It would take a week. I want someone there tonight. Tomorrow morning anyway. That's why it's got to be the schooner."

"Got to be? Got to be? Hark at that," Edison said. "Hark at that."

There was hardly more than a word or two in this conversation that the boy could fully understand. He watched with fascination the sarcastic swings of Edison's drumstick and the upraised, restless hands of the doctor, fingers upstretched in protest or appeal.

"Will you take her?" the young doctor said. "That's all I'm asking. Will you take her?"

"Not on your life."

"I'm not asking you on your life," the doctor said. "I'm asking you on the lives of the people on the island. Perhaps all of you. God man, in three days we'll have ramping, raging epidemic here."

"Will we?" Edison said. "If I'm going to snuff it, I'll snuff it here in the hotel. In comfort. Not in that bloody colander out there."

"I don't believe you even half grasp what the situation is," the doctor said. "Not a quarter——"

"Hell, it's probably only bellyache." Edison, picking up a whisky bottle, poured out half a tumbler and pushed the bottle across towards the doctor. "Help yourself. Give 'em all a shot of bug-killer."

Before the doctor could move or speak again, the boy saw Ginette, for the first time, as she moved across the cane blind beyond the cubicle. Half encased in her mass of black hair, she had been so much part of the shadow that he had never noticed her there.

Now she simply came forward, halted a foot or two from the table and looked at Edison.

"If you won't take her Fat Uncle will take her."

"Fat Uncle? That fat idiot? My God, Fat Uncle?"

"And if Fat Uncle won't take her, I'll take her myself."

"You. Fat Uncle. Fat Uncle. You!"

WITH contempt, Edison threw away the drumstick. It landed among the drums and cymbals on the little dais where Edison and Fat Uncle sat on Saturdays to play for dancing. In the silence that followed Edison drank again. The doctor did not speak and the girl sucked at her straw.

In fascination the boy stood watching Ginette. He saw her put her hands, palms outspread, on the flanks of her big hips. He watched her throw back her head, tossing the thick mass of hair from her shoulders. On her face was a look he had never seen there before. It struck him as being a look of calm, proud loathing.

A moment later she started to move towards the door where the boy stood watching. She still did not speak. As she moved away from the cubicle, Edison, in a further gesture of contempt, put one arm round the waist of the girl beside him, and the girl, in the act of sucking at her glass, laughed suddenly so that she seemed to spit down the straw.

"I'm going to ask Fat Uncle," said Ginette. "Even Fat Uncle has grown up from being a sucking-pig."

The boy saw Edison seize the bottle as if it were a hammer and a moment later he himself was through the kitchen, running, afraid the crash of the bottle would wake the Chinaman, who in turn would start yelling for water. But the crash, for some reason, never came, and he was beyond the kitchen and across the yard and inside the shed, waking Fat Uncle, before he recovered from fear and astonishment.

In the shed he had a further moment of astonishment when the girl arrived. In a few seconds it rose to a strange elation. Suddenly, and for the first time, as the girl began to speak to Fat Uncle, now pulling himself lethargically and still only half awake to sit on a soda-water crate, he began to understand what had been going on between Edison, Ginette and the young French doctor in the front part of the hotel.

He surmised, with exultation, that the schooner might, at last, be going to sea. The boat that went like a bird and in which Fat Uncle had splendidly roved the world, in the fashion of a sea-king, was about to sail, miraculously and unbelievably, beyond the reef again.

"There is great danger," Ginette said. "I mean not with the boat. From the epidemic. We have to be in Papeete tomorrow morning and pick up things for the doctor and then come back quickly. Does the engine work?"

Fat Uncle sat shaking his head. "It's not my boat. It's Edison's boat."

"He'll come. He's drunk now. But he'll come."

"Will the doctor come too?"

"No: the doctor won't come. He'll stay here, with the sick ones. But I'll come."

It did not seem to the boy that there was either fear or reluctance on the face of Fat Uncle, scratching his head as he pored, eyes groping, over the soda-bottling machine. It was altogether impossible for Fat Uncle, the

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THE HARMONICA OF THE STARS—AND YOU

man of great voyages, the creator of infinite legends, to show fear or reluctance. Fat Uncle was the man who had never been afraid. He interpreted it merely as the uncertainty of a man suddenly waking from sleep and finding himself momentarily stunned by the shattering import of news he had long wanted to hear.

"Does the engine work, I asked you?"

"I can't do it. I could never do it. It's Edison's boat."

"You've got to do it. The whole island may die if you don't do it. All of us. You too."

The shattered, crumbling figure of Fat Uncle stood up. The boy looked up at him with sensations of rising, exultant pride. He felt, too, that he suddenly loved him in a way quite unexperienced, quite unknown before.

"It's Edison's boat. He'll never let me."

"He'll let you. I'll see to it."

"And what if he won't? What then?"

"He'll come," she said. "You didn't see him when I called him sucking-pig."

In another moment a sensation of exorbitant, impossible hope ran through the boy. In a dazzling second of revelation he realized that he was within reach of becoming one with Fat Uncle, with the girl, and perhaps with Edison, on the schooner. He too might be able to go.

"Fat Uncle, Fat Uncle," he started to say and touched the arm of the quaking mass of flesh.

The shock of his touch was so great that Fat Uncle swung the elephantine arm that so often hit him when the soda-bottling machine became jammed. But now the arm trembled so much that it did not strike him and a moment later the Chinaman was yelling across the yard.

"No water! No water! I kill you one of these days."

The voice seemed to give Fat Uncle a remarkable burst of courage. The boy, caught between the stumbling sweating figure and the menace of the Chinaman in the yard, darted to one side, trying to escape, only to be caught this time by a lumbering backhander that knocked him off his feet.

"Get out of my way," Fat Uncle shouted. "I got things to do—I got things on my mind. Can't you see? Things on my mind!"

For the rest of the afternoon the boy pumped water. Sometimes, on days when he forgot to fill the tank, he heard a distinct sharp snarl of steam as water hit scalding metal on the exposed rooftop, but today he did not listen for the sound. His ears were on the sea.

From time to time the Chinaman, who did not take his pills either, came out of the kitchen to squeak thin admonitions across the yard. "I keep you pumping till midnight. See! I teach you to forget to pump."

When darkness fell with sudden swiftness, the boy was still pumping. At intervals he paused to listen, looking across the yard with solemn eyes in the direction of the hotel. But there was never a sound that would tell him what was going on there.

SOME time later darkness filled him with a new fear: the fear that Edison, the girl and Fat Uncle might have already manned the schooner, crept beyond the lagoon without his knowing it and disappeared. He could not bear this thought. He instinctively stopped pumping and ran out of the yard and across the waterfront without stopping to think of the Chinaman or what he would do when he found he was no longer pumping.

To his great surprise and delight the schooner was still moored at the jetty. He ran on and stood at the waterside, looking at her.

A great change, he thought, had come over her. Someone had left a lighted hurricane lamp hanging on the side of the deckhouse and the light gave the boat a golden ethereal glow.

He had never seen her looking like that; it made him catch his breath to see her bathed in light—mysterious and glowing. Across shallow parts of the lagoon beyond her a few men were already fishing, wading waist-deep in water, carrying their flares above their heads, or in canoes that carried flares on poles.

A moment later he actually felt a flame run through his body as he saw Fat Uncle and the girl appear on deck. He wanted to run forward. Fat Uncle had an oil drum in one hand. He swung the drum lightly as he crossed the deck and the boy knew that it was empty.

In his excitement he was ready to run forward to meet them when he heard, from behind him, the sound of other figures crossing the waterfront. He instinctively turned and darted away, hiding himself behind a palm-roofed corrugated iron stall where, in the daytime, a woman sold fruit, green coconuts and slices of water-melon.

From there he saw Edison arrive with the young French doctor. It struck him at once that he was a surprisingly sober Edison. He did not shout or stagger. His voice was hardly upraised at all as he called to Fat Uncle: "Does she go?"

"No."

"I told you she wouldn't."

"I'll have another go at her when it's daylight."

"She'll never go," Edison said. "I tell you. She never was any damn good anyway."

"She'll go like hell when she gets started," Fat Uncle said.

"When," Edison said. "When." He approached the gang-plank that connected the schooner with the jetty. He spoke now with compressed sarcasm. "Another thing you forgot," he said. "It costs money to run that thing. Who's paying that?"

The boy saw the girl fling up her head, for the second time that day, with a gesture of proud, sharp loathing.

"So that's what's worrying you," she said.

"Gas costs money," Edison said. "Oil costs money. And it's a damn long way. Well, who pays? I don't pay, I tell you that."

The young doctor, approaching the gangplank, spoke for the first time. "I will pay," he said, "or rather the *Institut* will pay. Dr. Gregory will see to that."

"Suits me."

"Now you have to be shamed into it," the girl said. "Now it's money."

"Don't goad me," Edison said.

"Goad you? Let your heart goad you," she said. "If that's possible."

"Get off the boat," Edison started shouting. "Go on . . . the pair of you. Come off her. She stays where she is."

He seemed about to spring forward, as if ready to snatch Fat Uncle and the girl from the deck with his own hands, but the young doctor took several strides forward, too. "It's imperative that she goes," he said. "Edison, I tell you it's absolutely imperative that she goes."

"Goes? I tell you she'll never get beyond the reef. . . ."

"I will buy the boat," the young doctor said. "I will give you a cheque on the *Banque d'Indo-Chine* as a deposit and we will fix the rest when Dr. Gregory comes back. How is that? Will you sell her?"

"No."

"All right. I will hire the boat. I will give you a cheque for that. I will pay for the oil too." The doctor spoke with succinct, flat contempt, not raising his voice. "I will also pay Fat Uncle to take her. I am even willing to pay you if it will make you happy."

"All right!" Edison shouted. "All right! So you hired yourself a tea-chest. Now what? All you have to do is to pull a string and she's off like a bomb."

"She'll start."

"And who's going to start her?" Edison said. He lifted thin, jeering hands in the direction of Fat Uncle. "That baboon? That bladder? He's been trying all night."

"I am going to start her."

"Confident man. Confident man," Edison said. "All confidence. She's never been started in six months. Nine months. How do you know she'll start?"

"Because," the young doctor said, "I have faith she will start. And because"—he was already walking towards the plank, rolling up the long white sleeves of his shirt—"I like talking to engines. They'll start if you talk to them the right way."

The doctor walked across the plank to the deck of the schooner. Edison retreated a few paces, preparing, it seemed, to go back to the hotel. And then suddenly, as if actually shamed by something the girl had said, or as if the thinnest of the doctor's veiled ironies had at last begun to have their effect, he turned and shouted towards the doctor: "She kicks like hell. She kicks back at you."

"I'll manage."

"There's a knack in it. You can stop her kicking if you know the knack."

"Thanks. I'll manage."

THE doctor's voice faded as he disappeared into the well of the boat below the little deckhouse. For a few moments longer the hurricane lamp remained suspended where it was. Then Fat Uncle took it off its hook, ready to follow the doctor below.

Edison called: "Hey, Fat Uncle!"

"Hallo?"

"I'll be back in ten minutes if you want me."

"Back?"

"We'll need food, won't we, you fat ape? We may be days in that thing. We'll need a case of bug-killer."

Edison turned abruptly and walked across the waterfront. For a moment longer the hurricane lamp illuminated the deck. Then Fat Uncle took it away.

The girl did not move from her position in the stern of the schooner. In darkness broken only by the occasional passage of a fishing flare across the lagoon behind her, she leaned on the rail of the boat, staring ashore.

The boy crouched for a long time behind the water-melon stall. He saw Edison reappear from the hotel, carrying crates and a second hurricane lamp, and then some time later appear a second time, carrying drums of oil. . . .

Some hours later the boy heard on the night air a new, thrilling and altogether miraculous sound. It made him start to his feet so suddenly that he cracked his elbow on the corrugated iron of the little stall. He was afraid for a moment that someone from the schooner would hear the sound and come down and find him hiding there, afterwards surrendering him to the Chinaman and the tortures of the pump again. But the girl, who had not moved from the stern of the schooner, lifted her head no higher than she might have done if she had heard the sound of a rat exploring a tin-can across the jetty.

He listened to the sound of the schooner engine for a long time. When finally it stopped on the night air and Fat Uncle had taken away the hurricane lamp and there were no more figures on the schooner, he felt he could still hear it, wonderfully beating through the darkness. All his blood was on fire with that sound.

Even when he climbed on board and lay down in the hold, in the bows of the boat, in complete darkness, he still imagined he could hear it, a great pulse marvellously driving his blood, miraculously ready to bear him out to sea.

To be concluded next week

STRANGE TALES OF THE SEA • 6

by Commander Douglas Duff

The island of women

EARLY in 1918, the American warship Yorktown, on routine patrol in mid-Pacific, noticed that no light was flashing from the lighthouse on Clipperton Island, a lonely atoll whose coral reef encloses a blue lagoon.

As the warship approached the island, those on the bridge could see through binoculars people gathering on the white beach beneath the palm trees, awaiting the ship's coming. They were amazed to see that all of them were women and girls. Were there no men on the island?

When the warship's boat reached shore, the seamen learned that it was so. There was not one man on Clipperton.

The women and girls were in a desperate state, and most of them were semi-starved. They had been living for years on what they could catch. Yorktown was the first ship they had seen since the outbreak of the first World War, three and a half years before.

Clipperton was the island the world forgot. In August, 1914, war had stopped the flow of ships which carried away the fertilizer the island produced. No supplies came in for the workers and the small garrison of troops. Within a few weeks, they faced starvation.

After a year the garrison commander made a despairing attempt to fetch help by putting to sea, with the only three soldiers still able to handle an oar. They were lost in their tiny boat somewhere in the seven hundred miles of ocean between Clipperton Island and the mainland of North America.

Worse came when a hurricane wrecked the lighthouse, for the survivors' one hope had been to attract any passing ship by its light.

Men and women weakened and died. Only a handful were left when the lighthouse keeper went suddenly mad and ran amok, slaughtering the few males, right down to the small boys. He proclaimed himself king of Clipperton and told the women they were to be the slaves of his harem—or the servants of those he favoured.

The wretched women took quick action.

Some of the strongest among them waited until he was asleep one night, and killed him with the axe, the only weapon he had not destroyed.

Then, month after month, living on what they could take from the sea and the nuts from the palms, they eked out their existence until the dark hull of U.S.S. Yorktown came over the horizon and dropped anchor off the reef.

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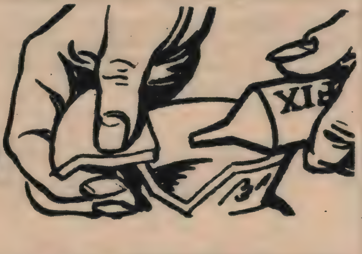
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Storm over Hollowground

Continued from page 17

come along in mornin' with tractor, use your rake, an' turn all yon hay again."

Tom smiled gratefully. "But aren't you goin' to show?"

"Not this year. If fine spell stays, you can sweep an' lead on Friday. I'll lend a hand."

"'Tis gey good o' you. Come over and have a bit o' supper. Janet'll be there."

Joe accepted. He noticed there was less strain about Janet's face and that her eyes had a hint of peace. Tom was in a cheerful humour, cracking away brightly. A day's sunshine had worked wonders.

Janet said: "We've waited a long while for this weather."

Tom's grin had an awkward touch. "She reckons 'tis an answer to hoping."

Joe smiled.

Janet said: "Likely it is."

Tom shrugged, and grinned once more. "I'll take it as an answer to hope," he said, "when we've had two or three days o' it. Aye, when hay's been led."

Janet said, with a note of reproach: "You ought to be among the hay to-morrow, instead of being away at Gillingdale."

Joe reassured her. "'Twas me persuaded him to go. It'll be a break. I'm comin' over to turn it again, and t'stuff can't be led before Friday."

Janet looked hard at Tom. "Well, you be back early. Don't stop late, or you'll be fit for nothing next morning."

He grimaced. "Depends on Jack. If he wants to stay on——"

"If you're thinking of the car," she said firmly, "that doesn't matter. You can walk back over the tops. You'll do it in a couple o' hours."

Tom laughed, and turned to Joe. "See how I'm bullied?"

"'Tis a gey wise sort o' bullying."

Janet said: "Come to supper with us. If Jack Wilson's leaving early and can drop you at Bank End, phone me from the Wheatsheaf over there not later than six. If I don't hear by then, I'll know you're walking. Follow the trod down by the Enner and I'll stroll up and meet you."

PARENTS—4

One good mother is worth a hundred schoolmasters.

Proverb

"Oo, aye."

"If you're walking, leave the show by six. In any case, don't let Jack Wilson persuade you to hang on at the Wheatsheaf. Promise?"

Tom grinned and nodded.

What followed that promise was something beyond the guessing of man. At the show, Tom and Wilson met a number of friends. They grew lively in the Wheatsheaf and, by six, Wilson had no intention of leaving early. Buoyed up by false cheeriness, Tom left reluctantly on that brilliant but sultry evening, headed for the splintery trod winding up Gillingdale Fell, and then began the long ascent of more than 1,500 feet.

Before he reached the top, the effects of the Wheatsheaf were wearing off and lack of confidence took their place. He plodded on gloomily and came to the summit.

The sun was still dazzling in the west, and beyond the line of the coast the Irish Sea had a lilac shimmer. But to the east spread a brownish haze, darkening to purple. Out of the warm stillness moaned a few sighings of wind.

Tom's mouth curved in resentment. There were the makings of an ugly storm in the offing. If it broke over Iredale, that turned hay would get drenched. And it might mark the end of this short fine spell. Two days of sun and then more rain—how could a chap be expected to go on struggling?

His face despondent, he followed the stony trod leading across the flat summit of the fell, a plateau of barren rock and bents and scanty, antlered spriggings of staghorn moss. The world to the west was still shining, but to the east the lofty outlines were shrinking fast into swart obscurity. After those sighings of wind, the air seemed sticky and breathless.

A sudden flicker of lightning ripped the approaching veil. For a second, crags leapt into being, glowering darkly at him. Tom quickened his pace, and a few heavy spots spattered down on him. Behind, the gilded stretch of the fell to the east was rapidly shortening under the dark advance of the storm.

More jagged stabs of lightning lit the scene, and the thunder was louder, echoing from ridge to ridge. He was an hour's brisk walk from Bank End, and bound to get soaked. That was nowt. But lightning that could split rock and strike sheep might well find a human being up here.

Jog-trotting, he aimed for the gorge of the Enner, cleaving its way seawards between Gillingdale and Iredale. The upper stretch of it came in sight below, a narrow trough descending gently between steep walls of granite. Now, in the distance he could just discern the V-shaped nick, scarcely twenty feet wide at the base, where the waters of the beck plunged over to the lower gorge.

The track he intended to follow kept high for a while, gradually dropping towards the bank of the beck; and, but for the threat of the storm, he would have stayed on it. What drove him to leave it and start scrambling down the steep, craggy wall was a blue crackle of lightning and a great explosion of thunder.

It was less exposed down there by the beck. He lowered himself from ledge to ledge in a hissing deluge, his wet hands snatching for holds at odd tufts of heather, sproutings of nardus grass, ribs of rock. The rain was almost blinding.

He came to a point ten feet above the course of the beck. Below him fell a smooth and glistening buttress of rock. It was no great distance to jump. He leaped for a small, smooth patch of bents. One nailed boot thudded home on it. The other landed between two boulders and, as he pitched over, the trapped ankle snapped like a carrot.

Swearing in agony, Tom eased himself clear. Then he had to face the truth. Janet would have turned back. Nobody would come walking on up through this storm. It would take him hours to crawl with a broken ankle down to Bank End, perching under the skirts of the fell where the Enner flowed out towards the coast. Maybe he would be stuck the night here, drenched and shivering.

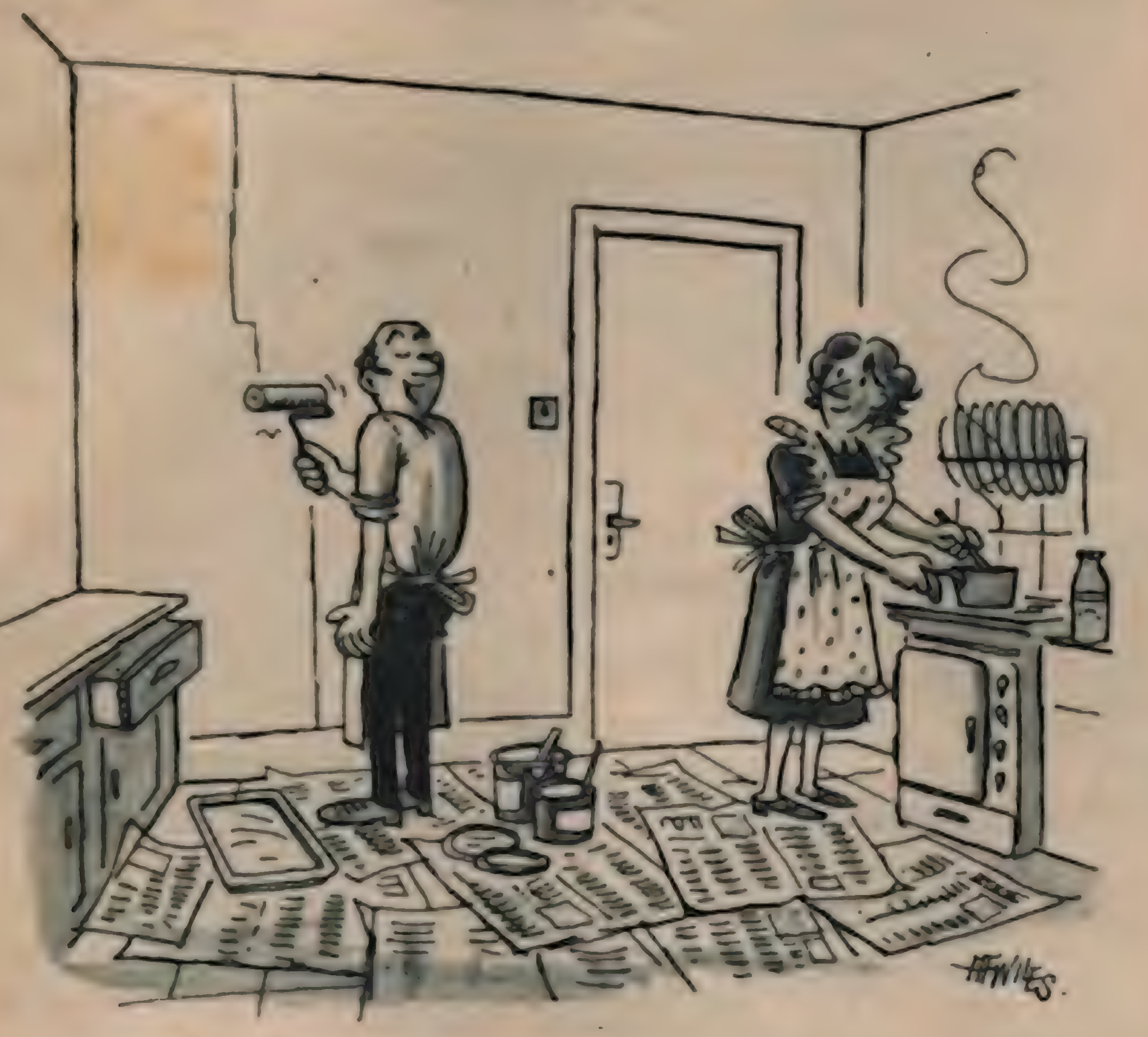
Sprawled among the watery rocks, the frothing Enner a couple of feet below him, he was more resentful than afraid. He would be found by tomorrow, with both Janet and Jack Wilson knowing he had set off this way. A search party would put him on a stretcher and carry him down, wet, cold, and crippled for weeks.

Janet had talked of hope, of things changing. "Ah," he told himself bitterly. "They're changed for the even worse."

No matter how a man tried to do his best, he couldn't master bad luck. It was a long sight more sensible to face it, and admit you were a beat. Being crippled for long enough with this ankle would mean the end of Hollowground.

He sat up, the ankle throbbing. The rain was stinging his face and running down his neck. A wavering glare of lightning brought the walls of the gorge close upon him and turned the foaming Enner to blue-white fire.

He found himself staring at it in a new, sharp bewilderment. The level of it had risen six inches in as many minutes. He knew that, because a branch of a drooping rowan had been above water. Now the tip of it was



"I'll leave the ceiling until after Pancake Day"

in the foam, being jerked and tugged by the stream.

He went on staring, refusing to credit his eyes. These becks among the fells could swell up fast enough, but this was something different. It was coming up with horrible speed. It was like an animal stalking uphill.

Painfully he edged himself against the base of the smooth rock wall. His hands groped for a suction grip, and he pulled himself erect on his one sound leg. But climbing back up that vertical sliminess was impossible. He would have to crawl farther along and find a spot where the side of the gorge rose less steeply.

As he turned his head, a quivering glare of lightning picked out the whole of the upper gorge. He saw the V-shaped nick where the Enner leaped over into the lower basin. It was no longer V-shaped. The base of it had grown wider and flatter.

The lightning died and, after its dazzling brilliance, he could see nothing for seconds. But he needed no sight to understand what had happened. In the first spate a tree must have been carried down, likely a rowan wrenched from the banks higher up, and had jammed against the base of the V. Sods and moss had been washed against it, stones and boulders. It was a dam, holding back the main flow of the Enner until the terrible pressure overwhelmed it.

He looked at the rim of the bank, and runnels of foam were dribbling across it, eddying among the rocks around his feet.

Sweat mixed with the moisture draining down his face. At the rate the Enner was rising, he would be drowned in five minutes, unless he could escape up the wall of the gorge.

HE started to crawl along, dragging the injured ankle over merciless stone and sharp, projecting flakes. The fringes of the rising Enner swilled across the bank, and his hands and knees were under water. The slimy wall on his left showed no sign of a break. He crawled on, and in a minute the overflowing Enner was washing midway up his thighs and round his elbows.

A shimmer of lightning revealed a change in the unbroken wall. It had become a series of smooth, tilted slabs. He struggled up on his sound leg, and the press of water about his knees threatened to topple him over. His fingers crooked over the top of the lowest slab. He began to draw himself up, and with two good legs he could have got clear. With only one, he was scrabbling against the smoothness of the slab, and slipping. He could never do it.

He heard himself saying with a sort of resigned calmness: "'Tis goodbye, Janet lass. I hope you find a better 'un than me."

Then there was a ghastliness of lightning, and a shout. Almost unbelieving, he saw Janet. She was edging herself along the crags above the lip of the gorge.

"I'm done!" he yelled. "Leg's broke."

She stared across, then at the choked nick of the gorge. Near her, growing between the rocks, stood a rowan about the thickness of a man's forearm. She reached up, seized it towards the top, and swung on it.

The risk Janet was taking choked the shout of warning in Tom's throat. She swung, and pulled, and there was a cracking sound above the noise of the waters. As the base of the trunk split, the tree came over.

Her feet braced themselves against the narrow ledge of rock. With a twisting heave she ripped the trunk free. Then she scrambled lower, poising herself on a flat ledge just above the dam. One end of the tree gouged into it. The other end was in her levering hands. A clot of stuff crumbled upwards, and a flume of water leaped through the gap.

Janet levered again, and the gap widened. Then, without any more warning, there was a gurgling roar, and a wave reared up, hissing, over the collapsed dam.

Janet picked her way across to him among rocks and frothing, receding water. Her arms closed around his waist, holding him. She was saying his name over and over again.

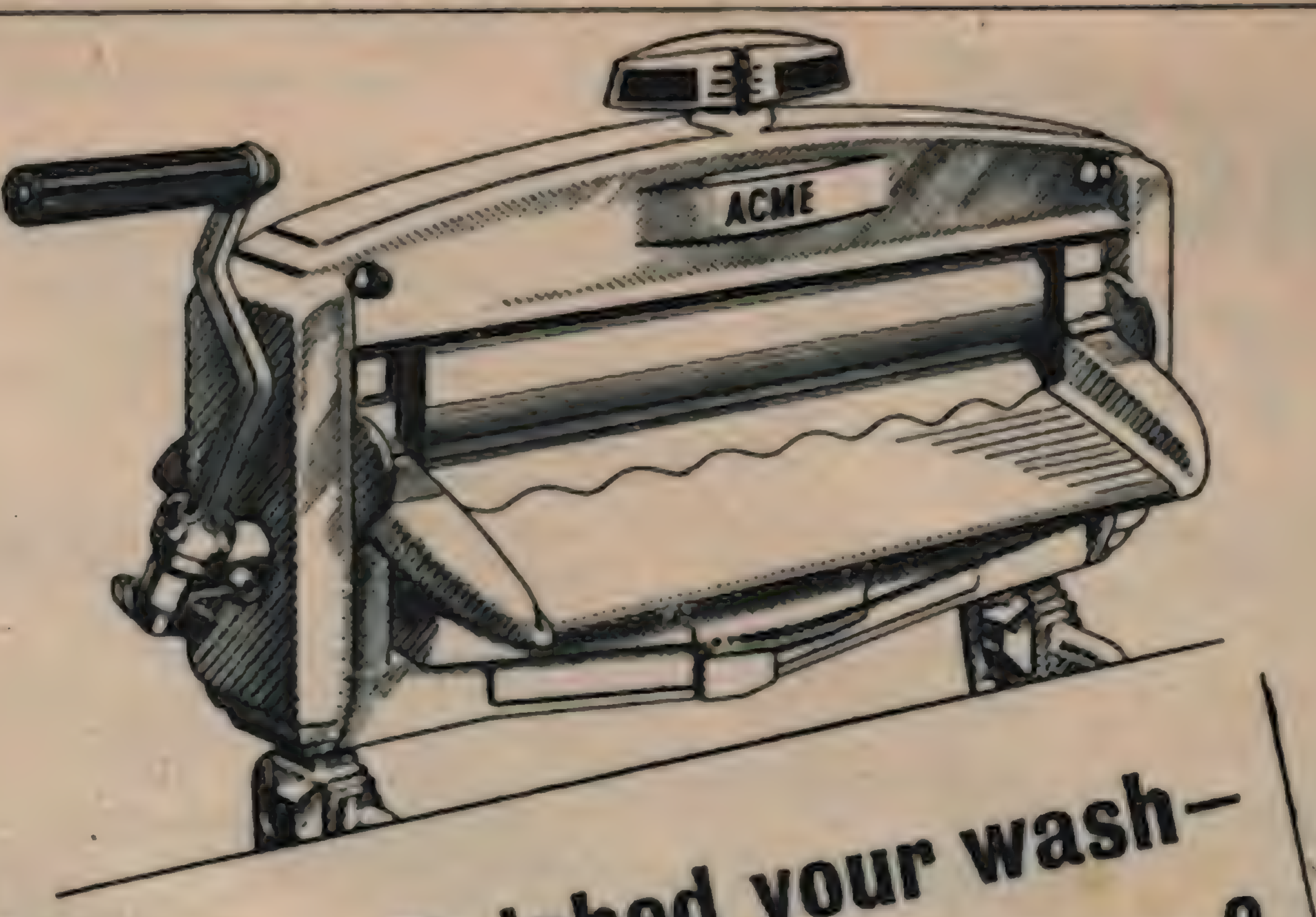
And then, while the released Enner narrowed sullenly back into its course, reaction set in and Janet started to cry. Tom stared at her, mystified. His cold, wet hand went out to pat her arm.

"Nay, lass, what's to do? We're safe, an' there's nowt wrong wi' me but broken ankle. What's to do? Along there, with that rowan, you were a fair capper. Now. . . ."

She went on crying in a quiet way, her face against his chest. For the first time, he found himself being the comforter, and it did to him what no comfort from her had ever achieved before. It gave him a queer, confident, warm feeling despite his shivering body.

He held her to him and said in a fond, assured voice: "Now, then, Janet! 'Tisn't like you. Cheer up, lass. You'll have to be off fetchin' help, a party to carry me down. Sooner they put this ankle right, the better. By gocks! I've got to make a good job of Hollowground or bust."

He kissed her wet hair and added: "Between us we'll show the dale summat, that we will." THE END



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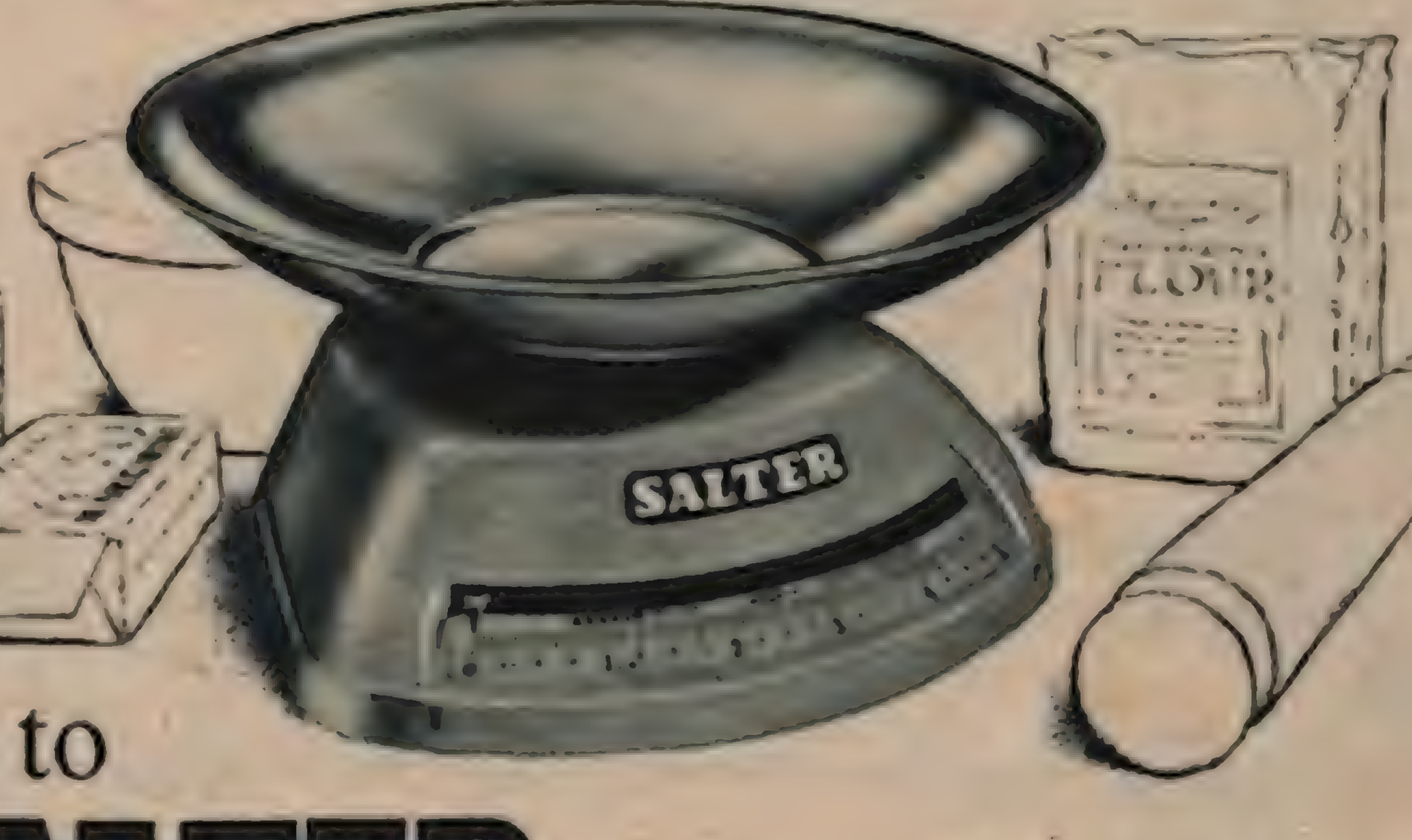

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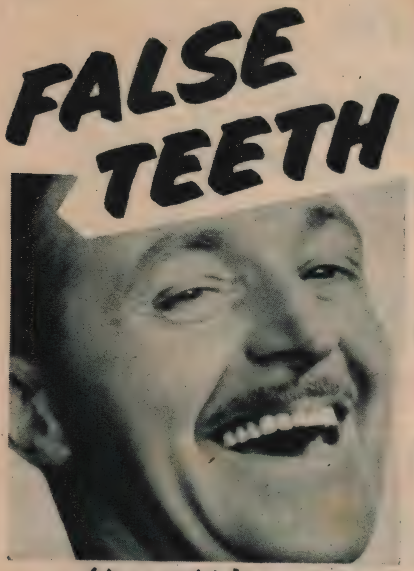

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The poet and the pilot

Continued from page 24

happily. Then, with one hand, he felt in the top of his trousers for the spare stick he had taken the trouble to acquire and hide before taking off. Out it came, and he turned with it in his hand, smiling a pale, mad smile.

He waved the stick at Maguire. "Pinch my girl, would you, you bad creature?" he shouted into the intercom, and had the pleasure of seeing Maguire's grin disappear as though he had blown a fuse in his thick head.

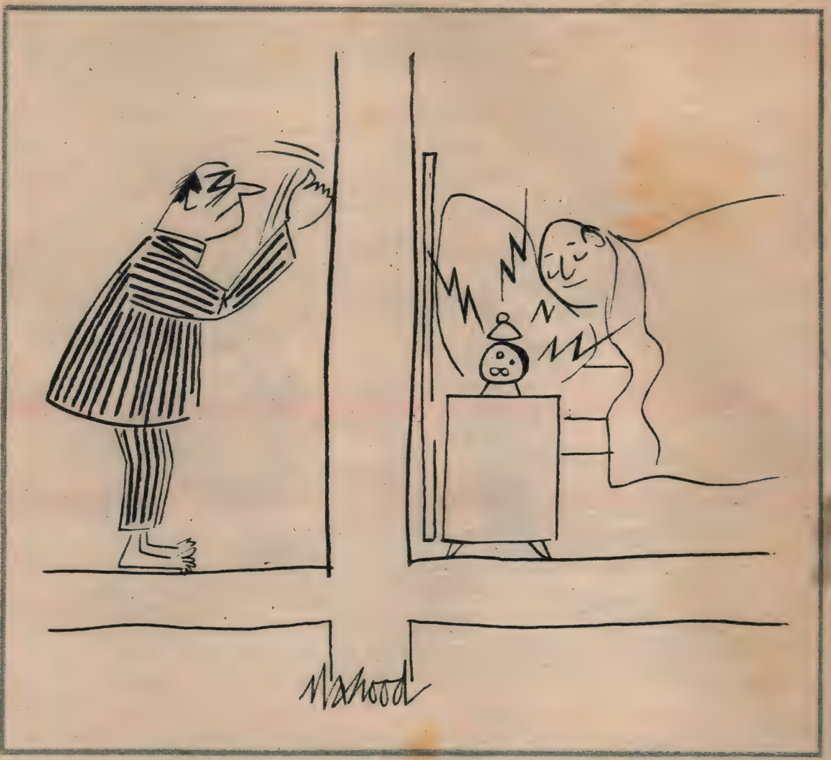
Patrick held the stick over the side and dropped it, ignoring the noise that was going on in his earphones. Down below, Clancy ran to retrieve it before he realized the import of its arrival.

Patrick turned again. Maguire was standing erect in the after-cockpit, shouting his head off. "Holy Patrick! Jaysus! Do you know what you're doing? Jump, you mad poet, or you'll never drink another stout. Jump, before she spins, or you'll never get out."

Patrick turned on the pale, mad smile again. He said nothing, only enjoyed the sight of the sweat standing on Maguire's red face.

"Then to hell with you!" Maguire shouted. "'Tis every man for himself." And he jumped.

Down he went, counting ten backwards and clawing for the handle of his ripcord, frantically aware that his parachute had not been repacked in a month of Sundays. At six hundred feet it opened, and Maguire whispered thanks. He looked up to see the Moth spiralling down, a couple of hundred yards away. He covered his eyes with his hands and whispered another prayer, for he was not that bad a man at heart.



ON the ground, Clancy had Maguire's sports car organized for a crash-wagon. There was Colonel Dundreary at the wheel, Marion standing, white-faced, on the back seat, the engine ticking over, and Clancy himself urgently examining a fire extinguisher to see if it had liquid in it.

Down came Maguire, falling fast because he weighed sixteen stone and parachutes are designed for the average man. There was a stiff breeze blowing. As he saw the ground swooping towards him, Maguire let out a whoop of dismay.

Then he hit. *Whunk!* The breath went out of him. He lost consciousness, the wind took his uncollapsed canopy, and away he went across country, rolling over and over until he was so tangled up with his rigging lines that he couldn't move a muscle.

The wind took him past the clubhouse, across the fairway of the first hole, over a ditch full of muddy water into which it dunked him in passing, and into the nearby farmyard of a slovenly agriculturalist called Michael Leary. There was a great deal of manure lying around and a gaggle of angry geese. The parachute collapsed itself against the uprights of a dutch barn, and Terence Maguire, blaspheming terribly, set about the task of getting himself out of his harness before the geese ate him whole.

Meanwhile, Patrick was bringing the Moth in to land.

"He's down," said Clancy, "though how the devil he did it without a stick I'll never know. We'll take the other one; didn't I see him fall in Michael Leary's muck heap?"

As the car skidded to a halt outside the farmyard gate Marion leaped out and ran as fast as her pretty legs could carry her. "Patrick!" she was shouting. "Patrick, darling, are you hurt? Oh, Patrick, Patrick my heart. Talk to me, Patrick."

Maguire stood up. He was a horrible sight. He took a wild kick at a goose, slipped and fell flat on his back again. His language befouled the air, and Marion said: "Oh. So it's you, Terry. Don't carry on so."

"Did he jump?" Terence Maguire demanded urgently.

"Jump?"

"Where did he crash, woman? Did you see it? Quickly!"

Marion scowled at him, her dark eyes smouldering. "Do you mean to tell me," she said, "that you thought you were going to crash and *you* jumped, leaving dear Patrick up there to get down as best he could?"

"I told the madman to jump," Maguire said sullenly.

"Well, he didn't," said Marion. "And he brought the plane down for a perfect landing. For shame on you, Squadron-Leader Maguire, and you the great hero.

"I never did believe you shot down all those Germans. 'Tis my belief that you're as windy as an old woman with a burglar under the bed, Squadron-Leader Maguire, you . . . you with your fast cars and all that! And who gave you permission to call me 'Woman'. . . ?"

"You had it stuck down your trousers all the time?" Marion giggled on the way back to Ballsbridge.

"That I did," said Patrick, grinning.

"I'd have paid a pound to see his face when you threw it over the side. Oh, Patrick! Oh, Paddy my darling boy, you're so brave and resourceful, and I love you very much." She was crying now, in the manner of a woman. "Would you . . . would you recite me that poem—the one about my eyes being like stars and my lips like cherries and . . . you know the one?"

"That I would," said Patrick, pulling the car into the roadside. And he did.

THE END

Three steps forward

Continued from page 21

about forty girls and women on the platform waiting for the train. They were all dressed alike and all seemed to know each other very well as they laughed and talked. About half of them were handicapped in various ways and the other half were normal girls who were going along as our helpers.

The train came into the platform and everyone helped everyone else and soon we were all on our way. Mrs. Alfreda Gentry, divisional Girl Guides commissioner for the area in which I lived, was in charge of us, as camp commandant.

The camp site is unique because it was built specially for handicapped people. It is situated in lovely wooded grounds with no steps to any of the buildings. The camp chapel is an open-air site in the centre of a ring of tall pine trees. All the helpers and those handicapped campers who have permission from their doctors sleep in tents; the rest sleep in a brick building. Most of the meals are cooked and eaten in the open air, but if the weather is bad a brick hut is used.

On arrival at camp everyone is put into a patrol. Usually there are about ten girls in each patrol, five normal ones and five handicapped. A handicapped girl is chosen as leader and it is her job to allocate the daily chores to the members of her patrol. Every girl is given some job no matter how bad her handicap, and the whole camp is thrown out of balance if she fails to do that job.

Most afternoons are spent in or by the swimming pool and the day ends with a sing-song round the camp fire.

On one day in every camp, patrols have their dinner in the woods. The girls who cannot walk are pushed there in their wheel chairs and carry the food on their laps. All the food, which usually consists of sausages, potatoes and flour, has to be cooked with Nature's aids only. The potatoes are baked in their jackets in a fire and the sausages are stuck on to the end of sticks and held over the heat.

I had to pass a pre-enrolment test of taking a friend out for a day. It was Mrs. Gentry's first year at an extension camp, so I asked her to accompany me. I thought that if I took the divisional commissioner nothing could go wrong and I would pass the test easily.

At about 11 a.m. we collected our sandwich lunch from the cookhouse and, with me seated on top of a pile of groundsheets in my wheel chair, we set out.

We were going to a place called Frensham Pond and I studied the map carefully. The first mile or so was along a straight road, so there was no chance of going wrong, but soon we came to a village green with three roads leading from it. Which was the correct one? There were no signposts. The camp nurse had told us to go one way, but the map seemed to direct us in the opposite way.

Mrs. Gentry said: "Let's go the way the nurse told us. The map might be out of date."

She pushed me up a steep hill at the top of which was a lovely cornfield. We decided this was a good place to stop for lunch and sat ourselves down on the groundsheets, just inside the gate. It was the highest hill for miles around and the view was magnificent. Clouds passed across the sun and we watched the rain falling on distant hills. Soon it reached us and it seemed the heavens opened. We had no raincoats with us so we covered ourselves with the groundsheets, leaving only our eyes showing.

The storm ended as suddenly as it

had begun and we crawled from our rubber tents, dry as a bone. Mrs. Gentry fetched the wheel chair from its place under the hedge and, as we folded up our groundsheets, casually remarked: "You know, Vera, I think we have gone wrong somewhere."

I agreed with her suggestion that we should go down the hill and follow the map. From the bottom of the hill we went along the road for about a mile and then turned off into a path. At first it was a smooth, wide path, but as we went farther it narrowed and became rough and bumpy until it was just a grass slope leading up to some back gardens.

Mrs. Gentry stopped for breath and gasped: "I don't like this path much. I cannot help the chair shaking so badly." Then, after a pause, she added: "I do hope you will not fall out."

"I never fall out," I boasted. Hardly had the words left my lips than the chair went over an extra large stone and tipped up and I fell on to the grass. I just could not do anything for laughing, but lay on the grass and roared and roared.

When Mrs. Gentry realized I was not hurt she joined in.

We went back to the road, but we were not to find Frensham Pond that day because when we reached the main road we found the camp nurse driving along in her car looking for the happy wanderers. She took us back to camp, and later that day I was enrolled as a Ranger by Mrs. Gentry. I had passed my test. . . .

I was anxious to get home from camp. *I wonder what the new house will be like? Will I be able to walk upstairs? I shall have to get up there somehow. I have never walked upstairs in my life except with a great deal of help from other people; how am I going to manage now?* These thoughts and many others kept running through my head.

When camp was over I went back to Aunt Queen's flat. From there Mother and Gladys took me to catch the train to Merstham.

Our house is a good fifteen minutes' walk from the station and it seemed that we would never get there. By now it was dark and I realized that, ironically, I would not really be able to see the house until the next day.

It was about 9 p.m. when Mother turned the key in our front door, and my heart missed a beat. We were in a small hall and there were the stairs, the obstacle which had to be overcome. Turning my back on them for a moment, I investigated the ground floor and was delighted to see that a comfortable living-room led into a well-equipped kitchenette. So far there were no difficulties. There were no awkward corners and the doors were large.

Now the question had to be faced. How was I going to get upstairs? It had to be done somehow. My bedroom and the bathroom were up there; I was too heavy to be carried.

Mother said: "You have got to get up there somehow—show me how you are going to do it."

"Hold on to the handrail and I will walk behind you," suggested Gladys.

"No, I don't think I will walk up. I might fall and hurt myself. It would be better for me to sit on the bottom stair and, while holding on to the handrail, lift my seat up one step at a time."

THERE were fourteen stairs and it took me about five minutes to reach the top, but it could be done, that was the important point.

For about three months I continued going up and down the stairs in this way. Then one day Mother arrived home with some coconut-matting stair carpet.

"This is good, hardwearing stuff," she said as she fixed it to the stairs. "It should last for years."

She was right, but, oh, my poor bottom when I had gone up and down the stairs a few times! It felt as though I had been sitting on sandpaper. It was obvious that I would have to use my feet—or all my pocket-money would be spent on underwear.

When Gladys came home I followed her upstairs and surprised her by saying: "I want to walk down. Will you please walk in front so that I will have something soft to fall on if necessary?"

We went down together. I held tightly to the handrail. It was not as difficult as I had imagined. I had only to overcome the giddiness which I felt when looking down the stairs and to stifle the fear of falling from top to bottom. We practised going up and down for some time and very soon I was able to tackle the stairs alone. Another obstacle had been surmounted.

True, I held the handrail with both hands and hung on rather tightly—so tightly in fact that on two occasions the rail came right out from the wall and had to be refixed—but as time went on I found the stairs were no longer the terrifying barrier they once had been, and eventually I found I could ascend and descend those fourteen steps in about a minute. Now I can go up and down those stairs quickly enough to get change for anyone waiting at the front door, and it always makes Mother laugh when I say: "I am just going to run upstairs."

It was wonderful living in the country with our own little garden and the open fields and farmland only a few minutes' walk from home. As is often the way on a new estate, people were glad to get to know each other, and soon we found we knew so many people we could not go the length of the street without stopping for a chat. Various clubs were formed and we were welcomed into a number of these.

One cold January day in 1954, Mrs. Collis came to see me. She asked why I had never fulfilled the promise I had made to her many years before—and so, with her encouragement, I started once again to write my life story. It was difficult but interesting, and I spent four or five hours every day working at the typewriter.

Soon after Mrs. Collis's visit, Mrs. Gentry came to tea and asked if I would like to go on a trip to France. In June a party of Rangers from Essex was going to St. Malo and they had a vacancy. At first I didn't believe her. How could I go abroad? I had never even dreamed of it as I thought I was much too handicapped to get on or off a ship. However she reassured me that the offer was genuine, and I gladly accepted.

Mrs. Gentry also asked if I would like to become a post captain in the Girl Guides. It would mean that I would have to take a course which every captain has to take whether or not she is handicapped, the only difference being that I would have to send my test papers through the post. I said that I would gladly take the course, but because of my scanty education I was rather dubious about the result.

However, when the first test papers were returned after marking I was surprised and overjoyed to find that the examiner had given me high marks. True it was only a simple test, but at twenty-six years of age it was the first examination paper I had ever completed, and I felt I was really learning something at last.

The next three months passed very quickly and every day was spent in typing the book or working on the Girl Guide course. In early April a new difficulty arose. Every time I started to type my eyes began to hurt and my nose ran as though I had hay fever. I thought it was just a cold, but it got no better so for about a month I did nothing but sit in the garden painting pictures. Mother sent for the doctor, who prescribed nose drops, and for a time these alleviated the trouble.

It was now June and time to go to France. From Guide headquarters in London, I went to Southampton by car with five other handicapped Rangers, Mrs. Dorothy Nichols, County Commissioner for London North-east, and Miss Margaret Simmons, Captain of the 2nd Essex Post Rangers.

We arrived about two hours before the main party, which was travelling by train, and were allowed to go on board straight away.

I had often been told that I would never be able to go abroad because I would not be able to get up the gangway of a ship. Yet here I was, walking up on my own. I had a handrail on each side to grasp and Mrs. Nichols was walking behind, but nevertheless I was walking, walking, up and up. I wanted to shout: "Look, everybody, I am walking on to a ship."

Shortly before 9 p.m. we slid out of the harbour and away to the strange land across the sea. There were twelve handicapped girls in our party and it was not long before we were taken to first-class cabins, three girls to each cabin. I do not think we had paid for the cabins, but the captain of the ship insisted that we should have every comfort.

After docking we were taken by car and coach to the Convent of St. Anne, a forbidding looking building, which was to be our home for the next ten days.

A nun came across the gravel drive to shake hands with Mrs. Nichols.

"I am Sister Gabriel and I am the only nun who speaks English," she explained. "I hope you and your handicapped girls will have a restful holiday."

The convent had been founded as a school, but because of the war and money difficulties it had been turned into an hotel convent for French gentlefolk. It could hold about one hundred people, but there were only sixty guests while we were there.

Early in our holiday we went to a bank to change our travellers' cheques. I did feel grand sitting in a bank and signing my own cheques.

One morning one of the guiders took me for a walk to the beach. She told me that she earned her living as a hospital car driver and she had heard a lot about Mrs. Collis. On the way back to the convent the guider bought a bottle of wine so that at dinner we could drink a toast to Mrs. Collis and her work. The wine was not very intoxicating, but caused a lot of comment from the other girls, who teased us unmercifully.

LATE that evening, as I walked upstairs with Sheila, one of the helpers, on the way to the dormitory, a bedroom door burst open and we found ourselves confronted by Miss Simmons, Mrs. Nichols and about ten of the girls. Miss Simmons burst into song and all the others joined in. They strode down the first flight of stairs and on to the landing, singing lustily:

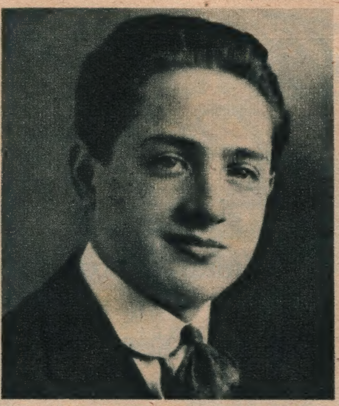
Show me the way to go home,
I'm tired and I want to go to bed,
I had a little drink about an hour ago. . . .

It sounded so funny to hear them singing this type of song, in a convent of all places, that Sheila and I started to laugh and laugh until the tears rolled down our faces. We laughed so much I lost my balance and fell over, pulling Sheila on top of me, and as we lay on the stairs, convulsed by giggles, we could see the "choir," with their faces turned towards us, grinning from ear to ear.

Suddenly I looked along the corridor and saw that the doors of the other guests' bedrooms were open and from each doorway a face peered, wearing a look of absolute disgust. Seconds later the singers saw them, too, and walked down the stairs, still singing, and Sheila and I picked ourselves up and went quickly to our bedroom. . . .

When I returned home, I found there

MY BROTHER Jack



WHEN we were children we lived in Frying Pan Alley off Petticoat Lane in London's East End. Father had a fish stall and my brother Jack got up at five each morning to go to Billingsgate Market to collect the fish and then pottered about the stall until it was time to go to school.

By eleven o'clock he would be falling asleep at his desk and his schoolmaster soon started some inquiries. When he found out that Jack knew more about the fish business than men four times his age, he decided to let him go on sleeping.

During the first World War when food was scarce, Jack found a little place in Norfolk where he could get fresh-water fish. He got on very well until one day he saw some of Father's East End competitors in the village. Realizing that if they got a contract it would damage Father's trade, he managed to convince the local inhabitants that the intruders looked like German spies. Led by Jack, they chased them out of the village.

One day Jack took me aside and told me he was going to run away to America. I watched tearfully from my window as he set out with three of his friends for Tilbury. It was with tremendous relief that I heard Jack stagger into our bedroom at about five in the morning.

Apparently the boat could take only two of them, and Jack was one of the two who lost the toss. Not only had my brother and his friend failed to get a lift to America, but they had also failed to get a lift back to London, and had to walk all the way home.

Jack had a friend named Harry Grossman who wanted to be a boxer. Once, when Harry was unable to take part in a fight that had been arranged for him, Jack took his place. I was delighted to see my brother, who was introduced as Harry Grossman, beat his opponent in two rounds.

The promoter was so pleased with Jack's performance that he sent another card to Harry Grossman asking him to take part in a second fight. Jack had to go again or it would have given the game away. He beat his opponent in four rounds.

On the third occasion on which he pretended to be Harry Grossman he had to go to Southampton for the fight. By now it looked as though he was going to be landed with a double identity, and if he had won again I think he might have taken up boxing seriously.

But he came home next day with a broken tooth, a crushed nose and the loveliest black eye I have ever seen.

WHO IS THIS FAMOUS BROTHER? See page 42 was very little I could do because of the pain in my nose. Eventually, a hospital specialist said that my nose had a buckled septum and an operation was the only way to put the trouble right. He asked whether I would like him to go ahead with the operation, and for a moment I was silent.

I wished desperately that Mrs. Collis was there, she would have known what was best. It was not that I was afraid of the operation; in fact it was not really a very serious one, but I knew it would upset my handicap and make it worse for quite a time. On the other hand, I could not go on as I was, and the doctor said that there was no other way of overcoming the pain.

My tongue was dry and seemed to cling to the roof of my mouth as I said: " Do whatever you think is best. I do not mind.''

It was November when a letter arrived from the hospital asking me to go in the following day.

There a young nurse undressed me and put me to bed and I leaned back against the pile of pillows, trying not to think of the morrow. It was strange to be in a ward full of normal women, most of whom were in hospital for a minor operation only and would be going home in a few days' time. It was so different from the hospital for the chronic sick. Here everyone was cheerful and seemed to treat the enforced stay in bed rather as a few days' rest from household chores and worries.

Later that night, when everyone was tucked down, I offered a silent prayer to God to help me through this difficult time.

The next day I had the operation, and ten days later I went home. I still felt a little weak and expected to find my handicap was much worse, but, to my surprise, and to the delight of Mother and Gladys, I could do anything almost as well as a normal person. My hands did not shake and I walked without the fear of falling, but my joy at this discovery was clouded by a worry which nobody else knew about—I found it impossible to do mental arithmetic or to remember anything: my brain seemed to be numb and just would not work properly.

It was soon apparent what was happening. The drugs were still having an effect on me, and as, in time, these effects wore off I began to get more and more shaky. It was not long before my movements became almost as uncontrollable as they had been ten years before, and I began to worry that I would never get better.

After months of hard work I began to make some headway, but this experience had shaken my confidence. Was I really the person to help cerebral palsied people when apparently I didn't know enough about the way to help myself? Once again I turned to God for advice and patiently waited for His answer, which came about six months later.

Miss Jane Miller, one of the senior staff at Mrs. Collis's unit, wrote to me one day to say that the doctor who had been medical superintendent of Queen Mary's for many years had left and opened a home for cerebral palsied adolescents. She invited me to join her on a visit there.

She came by car one evening and took me to her London flat, where I stayed the night. The following day we drove to the home, called Ponds, where we were given a warm welcome by the doctor.

After lunch the doctor, Jane and I sat together in his large and comfortable sitting-room talking about all manner of things. Jane and I asked all the questions and the doctor did his best to supply the answers.

He told us that Ponds had been opened a short time previously for young men and women who were badly handicapped with cerebral palsy and who were in the position in which I had found myself on leaving the unit —with the bleak prospect of spending the rest of their lives in a home for the chronic sick. At that time he did not have a definite plan for the future of Ponds: he did not know how or for what the ten residents could best be trained, but in the meantime they all helped with the housework and were encouraged to cultivate a hobby.

As we sat there talking I suddenly realized that there were three people in the room and we all seemed to have something of interest to say to each other. So often I have been in a room where normal people are talking, and when I have attempted to join in the conversation I have been ignored or met with a glare, but here both Jane and the doctor listened to every word I said and gave straight answers to all my questions. They made me feel my proper age instead of a child among adults, and I thought how much easier and pleasanter life would be if everyone had the intelligence to treat handicapped people in this way.

During our visit we were shown over Ponds and were delighted with the way in which this lovely old mansion was being converted to take wheel chairs and people who had difficulty in walking. I joined the young people in one of the large rooms with its magnificent views over the surrounding countryside. As they sat there, some in wheel chairs, some in armchairs, listening to the radio and trying to keep their badly behaved bodies still, I realized that this was the sort of place I would like to work in. I wanted to help these people to help themselves.

Back in London a pleasant surprise awaited me. Jane had booked tickets for the ballet at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and there we were joined by the parents of one of the ballerinas, who, after the performance, invited us to join them at a little French restaurant in Soho.

I felt very grand and proud as the waiter asked what wine Madame would like. I was being treated as a lady and I did my best to behave as one and to make my awkward body behave gracefully for once.

At home next morning it became clear to me that before I could help anyone else I would have to convince people that I knew what I was talking about, and the best way to do this would be to continue once again writing my autobiography.

At first I spent hours each day at the typewriter in my bedroom. The machine was rather heavy and awkward to move, so when the summer came and Mother insisted I should sit in the garden to get more fresh air the typewriter remained upstairs and I had to continue writing by hand.

Soon I found my writing improved, and before long it became quicker to write than to type. Spelling and grammar were still very bad, and Jane and Gladys helped me with this by correcting my draft and typing it as it should be. Even though I could now write more quickly it was still taking too long. One evening Gladys made a suggestion.

" Why don't you learn a little shorthand, Vera? It will be much quicker for you. I will write down a list of outlines for all the most common words and then you can memorize them.''

" But you will never be able to read it,'' I protested.

" I don't see why not. It will probably be easier than deciphering your atrocious spelling,'' she laughed.

I found that shorthand writing was much simpler than it looked; a lot of the monotony was taken out of writing and now that I could get my thoughts on to paper more quickly it became easier to construct good sentences. I continued writing, month in, month out, in sunny weather in the garden, in cold weather by the sitting-room fire, and whenever I came to a part that was rather difficult I visited Mrs. Collis at the unit, where she was always ready to give her assistance.

As I write, it is now summer, 1956, and in a few weeks' time Gladys is to be married. I was jealous of Ron, my future brother-in-law, when he and Gladys first met because I knew it was extremely unlikely that I would ever marry and I felt resentful that anyone should occupy a higher place in her affections than me. However, in a short time Ron and I became friends and now I look upon him as my brother.

Ron, who is a builder, is always ready to give me a helping hand. He promised that he and Gladys would set up home with Mother and me, so the fear that at some time in the future I might be unwanted has been quashed. I know I shall always have a home, a home where I am welcome and which the family does not want me to leave, but apart from doing a little housework, needlework, and so on, how shall I fill the time?

There is an alternative. The doctor at Ponds has offered me a place there, and I am tempted to accept, but if I go there I want it to be as a worker and not as a patient. I know there is a great deal I must be taught before I can teach, and I am still hopeful that one day I shall be accepted for a course at a training college where I might possibly learn to improve my spelling and to do the complicated kind of arithmetic necessary for completing an income tax return—just in case I ever earn enough money to need to complete such a form.

Whatever happens in the future, I know that God will help and guide me as He has always done along the many unusual paths which he has set before me.

Looking back over the years I realize just how much my physical condition has improved:

Speech . . . is far from perfect but is understandable to most people.

Feeding . . . I still use a spoon as this is so much quicker than a knife and fork, but, apart from my needing the meat to be cut up, there are no difficulties.

Drinking . . . I use a half-full mug with a large handle, or else a drinking straw, and then can manage alone.

Walking . . . indoors and in the garden I walk unaided, although I still often tumble; for short distances out of doors I walk quite well by linking arms with one or two people.

Handiwork . . . apart from an occasional jerk, when I am nervous or excited, my hands do not shake. I can thread and use a very fine needle for sewing and my embroidery compares favourably with that of a normal person.

Writing . . . at long last I have progressed to writing as against printing, and my penmanship is fairly neat; but it still takes me about three hours to write a short letter.

Appearance . . . occasionally I forget myself and wear a rather doleful expression, but for the most part I now look normal when sitting still. It is true that children often stare when they hear my deep voice or see that I wear boots, which are easier for me to wear than shoes.

Achievement . . . at a recent Ranger test I laid and lit a fire with one match, and then helped to cook a meal in a frying pan. A few years ago I could not hold anything as small as a matchbox and I most certainly would never have been able to strike a match.

Some days I make progress and sometimes I slip back a little; it depends to a large extent upon my state of health and frame of mind. The progress made is usually in such small stages as to pass almost unnoticed. It is only when meeting somebody I haven't seen for a long time, and they remark on the improvement, that I realize with gratitude that I have taken another step towards independence.

I thank God for the greatest of all His blessings—Hope! But I know that hope has to be backed by hard, intelligent work if dreams are to be fulfilled. And so one day I sat down, determined to finish this book.

THE END

" Three Steps Forward," by Vera Dean, will be published in the autumn by Faber and Faber.

THESE MEN ARE DANGEROUS

Derrick Harrison won the Military Cross fighting with the Special Air Service, the army's master saboteurs. Behind enemy lines they blew up railways, raided airfields and ambushed convoys. Hitler decreed that they should be "slaughtered to the last man." Harrison's thrilling story of action and courage . . .

BEGINS IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

MY BROTHER JACK

See page 41

Jack Solomons, the boxing promoter, is the famous brother of Mr. Max Solomons

EASTER in PARIS for YOU?

FUN with words *today* can take you to Europe's gayest city for Easter — to celebrate winning £500 for a *Bullet*!

"An unforgettable weekend!" declared Mr. J. G. Roberts (Oldham), a First Prize-winner who celebrated *his* success in Paris. You see him, with his wife, at the Eiffel Tower.

Your entry coupon is below—Paris plus £500 awaits you. Your weekend for two would include flying B.E.A., hotel, sightseeing—all for the few words of a *Bullet*!

PRIZES INCREASED TO OVER 2,000 THIS WEEK!

£500 "BULLETS" 1st PRIZE PLUS EASTER WEEKEND in PARIS

£25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 3 of £5, 10 of £2 10s., 30 of £1, 2,000 NEW 2-in-1 SURPRISES

UP TO 20 CHAMPAGNE DINNERS SEE COUPON

THIS WAY TO WIN

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

To Help Macmillan
Prosperity's Bus
Windy World
The Kremlin Crew
In Power
The Family Budget
On The Wing
Due For A Clean-up
Yelling Blue Murder
Nature's Choir
Inflammable Stuff
As I See It
Those Emigrants
Poisonous
Tried And Trusted
Man Who Can Move
The Awakening
When He's Paid
A Slap-up Do
Night-watchman Grandpa

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

.........Went To Work And Wrecked The..................
.......................Customer
Unhealthy.........................
.........................Substitute
If..............Were Rationed

EXAMPLE ....
BULLET
EX. ....
B.
EX. ....
B.
EX. ....
B.
EX. ....
B.

CHAMPAGNE DINNERS 5-lb. Surrey Fowl and Champagne with each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of five or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

2,080 CLOSING POSTMARK MONDAY, MARCH 11

I agree to rules and enclose P.O., at the rate of 6d. per *Bullet*,
Value...... No...............

Signed..
Address..
....

TO HELP YOU WIN Stick 2½d. stamp on right for the new 4-in-1 *"Bullets" Bulletin*, containing coupons for *Bullets* 2,081, 2,082, 2,083 and 2,084.
846

STICK 2½d. STAMP here for *"Bulletin"*

NEXT WEEK HUGE "SEE EUROPE" OFFER!

Chief Winners No. 2,075

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Home Luxuries: Miss J. B. Buckland, 22 Norris Street, Preston, Lancs:

On The 1957 Screen "More" "Wisdom," "Hope," "Justice"?

£25: A. J. Bentley, 6 Tintern House, Augustus Street, London, N.W.1: WHEN BRITAIN WAS THREATENED — SIRENS INSPIRED — COULDN'T *Hooters?*

£10: A. G. Browning, Beaulieu House, High Street, West End, Southampton: WHAT INFLATION MEANS — "CUTTING CLOTH" — *And* SLOTH!

OTHER AWARDS: £9: Mrs. A. Lamb, 47 Burnthwaite Road, Liverpool: OUR FRIENDS, THE YANKS—OPEN-HANDED—BUT THE "SLAPS"! £8: W. J. Delury, 8 Alder Copse, Horsham: THE SCHOOL WINDOW—WINS—*Jets* "CHALKING" *Sky*! £7: C. J. Smith, Lodge Farm, Thorney, Peterborough: IDEAL BATON—AWAITING A "TOSCANINI"—*Olive-branch.* £6: Mrs. J. A. Brown, 29 West Mall, Clifton, Bristol: DOWN TO BRASS TACKS—TOGETHER—*Then* A "GLEAM"! £5: Mrs. M. Nelson, 64 Northfield Farm Avenue, Edinburgh: THE SCHOOL TALES—*Plus* DADDY'S—ANNE NONPLUSSED! £5: Mrs. J. K. Robinson, Peakhome, Buxton Road, Chinley, Stockport: ON THE 1957 SCREEN—SHAPELIEST "STARS"—FULL-BODIED OIL-TANKERS! £5: J. Taylor, 13 Manor Road, Cuddington, Northwich: VENEER OF CIVILIZATION — DAD'S MARQUETRY SET REMOVED!

Ten Prizes of £2 10s., 30 of £1 and 2,000 new 2-in-1 Awards have also been posted.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit, the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. at the rate of 6d. per *Bullet*. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated April 6), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, March 23, for early news of No. 2,080 result.)

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 2,080, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99

"Baby on the Way"

Order your copy today!

IMPORTANT NEW MOTHERCRAFT SERIES begins this month!

"Baby On The Way" is the personal story of a young mother of four, full of sound advice for modern mothers-to-be—given in a delightfully easy-to-read way! Month by month her own experiences and knowledge will help other wives to enjoy a happy, healthy pregnancy and face childbirth without fear. Start reading it in MOTHER's big March issue!

132 pages—including

- How to Buy Your Pram
- 2 Bargain patterns for cleverly cut Maternity clothes
- Children's Night Fears by Nurse Williams
- 4 smart new Knitting Designs
- Pancakes With a Difference
- New Furniture from Old

MOTHER The Magazine of Happy Marriage

MARCH ISSUE · OUT FRIDAY MAR. 1st 1/3d.

Haemorrhoids?
(PILES)

. . . not since I've been using Germoloids

Germoloids

There is another name for haemorrhoids. They are more usually known as piles—and piles can be very uncomfortable. They can be extremely painful. Yet, today, relief is a comparatively easy, straight forward matter; a method used in hospitals and clinics. Ask your chemist for a box of Germoloids—and follow the simple directions. People who have suffered, and suffered severely, have found in Germoloids complete relief—an experience which can seem like the beginning of a new life.

FREE! *Send post card now for frank and informative booklet telling you all about Haemorrhoids; what causes them, their treatment, and how you can prevent their recurrence. Write to The Veno Drug Co. (Dept. J.B.65), St. Helens, Lancs.*

Box of 12—2/6d.

"FITTING PHRASES" COMPETITION

RESULT OF SECOND CONTEST WHICH APPEARED IN ISSUE DATED JANUARY 12

Another Reader wins £250 outright!

In the opinion of the adjudicators, the most skilful and appropriate fitting of Phrases to Advertisements was that submitted by:—

MR. L. WINSTON, 88 QUEENS CRESCENT, LONDON, N.W.5

A cheque for £250 has accordingly been awarded for his entry as below:—

Phrases	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Adverts	M	G	O	C	L	A	K	F

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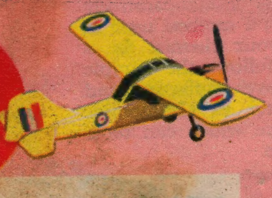
Weetabix
12-3lb BAGS
Weetabix
PLAIN FLOUR

Says *Calorie Ann*

(the Weetabix glow-girl)

"Every porter ought'a know Weetabix for winter glow"

CHILDREN Send off now for your "WEETABIX WONDERPLANE" Construction Kit — it's super! A real flying model, elastically powered, with a metal propeller and a mainplane of true aerofoil shape —designed by aeronautical experts. Wing span 21 inches. Get your Weetabix Wonderplane now.



3/6 POST FREE

WONDERPLANE

MOTHERS Here is your chance to obtain a first class CARVING KNIFE. The 8½″ blade is hollow ground finest stainless SHEFFIELD STEEL. It's a beauty!

WONDER KNIFE

5/6 POST FREE

HOW TO OBTAIN THESE OFFERS

Send a postal order for 3/6d. for the "Wonderplane" or 5/6d. for the "Wonder Knife" with either the Weetabix Perfect Flour panels from the sides of 2 Family Size (or 4 Standard Size) **Weetabix packets**, or the stamp coupons from the tops of Two 3 lb. bags (or Four 1 lb. bags) **of Weetabix Perfect Flour.** *Valid in the United Kingdom only.*

Eating the right energy foods (heat producing foods) is the best and most natural way to keep warm in winter. That's why Weetabix (the finest energy food there is) makes such a wonderful winter breakfast. Weetabix kindles a comforting glow which lasts all morning through.

Weetabix

THE WHOLE WHEAT CEREAL

SEND TO:—
WEETABIX LIMITED (DEPT. 3.Z), BURTON LATIMER, Nr. KETTERING, NORTHANTS. Enclose your name and address clearly written in BLOCK LETTERS, and state 'WONDERPLANE' OR 'WONDER KNIFE.'

Weetabix
You must try
Ready to eat

Weetabix *wonder offers!* SAVE THESE